THE VIRTUOUS ORPHAN:

OR, THE

LIFE

OF THE

COUNTESS of *****.

Written by HERSELF.

The SECOND EDITION.

In TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

Tranſlated from the FRENCH.

Recommended to the YOUTH of both Sexes, as proper to fix in their Minds juſt Ideas of VIRTUE and RELIGION.

Delightful Task! to rear the tender Thought,
To teach the Young Idea how to ſhoot!
To pour the freſh Inſtruction o'er the Mind!
To breathe th' inſpiring Spirit, and to plant
The generous Purpoſe in the glowing Breaſt.

THOMSON.

LONDON:
Printed for JACOB ROBINSON in *Ludgate-ſtreet.*
MDCCXLVII.

BRITISH LIBRARY
15
75
MAR

PREFACE.

THE reading of that part of hiſtory that relates to human life and manners, has been always conſidered, by allowed judges, as one of the beſt methods of inſtructing and improving the mind. When we ſee the heart laid open, and the ſecret ſprings and movements that actuate it expoſed, and ſet in one impartial light, with their different good and evil tendencies; we are enabled to form a true eſtimate of human nature, and are taught what ought or ought not to be our own conduct in every ſimilar inſtance. But the inſtruction, I think, is not carried to its proper extent: the ſcene of action is generally laid in exalted and public life, among deep politicians *and* martial heroes *And though this may be of ſervice in cheriſhing public-ſpiritedneſs, and a warm regard for the intereſt and good of nations; yet, few readers, comparatively ſpeaking, will ever have occaſion to reduce the example into practice: and, bating what I have juſt mentioned, all the advantage reſulting from their ſtudy will be this; that they are informed of ſome matters of fact, pleaſed, aud ſtruck with admiration. But when the hiſtory is reduced to our own level, and applicable to our real circumſtances in life, much extenſive and laſting benefit may accrue from the peruſal of it: for in the right diſcharge of the common duties of humanity, and in a proper conduct, either in affluent, or in embarraſſed and difficult circumſtances, every one has an immediate and important concern: in the frailties too, and little foibles of our nature, we are all pretty equal ſharers: an example, therefore, given to theſe purpoſes; that deſcribes every different diſpoſition of the mind, according to the variety of its ſituations, and the actions naturally flowing from thoſe diſpoſitions, and all guarded too with juſt encomiums on the ſide of virtue, and ſevere cenſures and remonſtrances againſt vice, cannot fail, I think, of making a ſtrong impreſſion on the mind of every perſon, not wholly loſt to all ſenſe of moral excellence, and producing ſome of the genuine fruits of it in his conduct. Beſides, hiſtories of this kind are generally made public by way of entertainment; and under*

that

that notion, even a libertine may be induced to read them with eagerneſs and delight: and it is highly probable, if he goes thro' them with attention, and is not paſt all reflection and ſerious thought, ſome incident, or applicable circumſtance may ſtrike him, and tend greatly to his reformation. And what an entertainment indeed will they be to a judicious and ſober reader, when he finds religion and virtue painted in the moſt lovely colours, and ſet in every attractive light! The advantage too, that theſe entertaining pictures of human nature may be of to youth, is very conſiderable. Thoſe who have been concerned in the important buſineſs of education, muſt know, that the love of pleaſure is the moſt natural and eaſy inlet to young minds: every thing that preſents itſelf through this channel is ſure to gain a ready acceſs: cloſe and abſtract reaſonings are above their capacity; grave and ſerious diſcourſes may ſometimes fail of the intended effect; for (not to inſiſt on the averſion common in young people to every thing gloomy and ſolemn, and that is impoſed as a task,) it requires great exerciſe of thought and reflection to attend to the thread of a diſcourſe, and conceive immediately every idea the writer or ſpeaker would expreſs. But lively examples, and plain matters of fact are eaſily apprehended; and the moment their underſtandings are informed, the affections are excited, which, being free from all falſe biaſſes, are properly and exactly ſuited to each particular incident as it occurs to them. And thus, if due care is taken to fix the application deeply in their minds, a love of virtue, and an abhorrence of vice, is inſenſibly inſtilled into them, and the impreſſion may laſt for ever.

IT muſt be acknowledged then, that a hiſtory in familiar and common life, is, in point of real uſefulneſs, preferable to every other: ſince the benefits ariſing from it are univerſal, and extend to all ſtations and circumſtances. For even the ſtateſman *and* general *(in which two peculiar views mankind are commonly repreſented in hiſtory) cannot be ſaid to form a complete character, without attending to the offices and duties of private life: and it is this laſt branch of conduct (when their hiſtory is related) that can be of real advantage to the generality, and point out any thing to them capable of their imitation.*

THE

THE hiſtory before us deſerves to be conſidered as a uſeful piece of inſtruction; a leſſon of nature; a true and lively picture of the human heart. Our little foibles are expoſed with much wit and ſpirit. The true motive to every action is honeſtly acknowledged, and not the leaſt pretenſion made to a virtue, which in reality had no exiſtence. Of what uſe this natural colouring, and painting things juſt as they are in themſelves, muſt be, is very obvious; for they who know any thing of human nature, will readily acknowledge, that we are too apt to impoſe upon ourſelves, in aſcribing thoſe actions of ours to a laudable motive, which in fact had their riſe from ſome low and ſordid diſpoſition. The reflections have nothing in them ſtudied and forced; but are the language of the heart, the fruits of experience, dictated immediately by the circumſtances of the perſon who makes them. The ſentiments throughout have an uncommon delicacy and beauty in them, they do honour to morality, and ought to be cheriſhed by every one who would be truly polite, and throw a luſtre and an attractive quality on his virtues: in one word, it is a production that reflects honour on the French nation.

BUT ſtill there may be ſome readers whom it will diſguſt. A few of mankind, out of a love of cavil, and an affectation of ſuperior judgment, find fault with every thing, for no other reaſon but becauſe it is generally approved of. Others again can reliſh no hiſtory that does not ſet the hero in a perfect and unexceptionable light; blemiſhes and defects in his behaviour they won't admit of; a low character, though juſtly painted, is contemptibly hurried over; in ſhort, their pride and delicacy are ſhocked, if they meet with any circumſtance that ſuits human nature, and is below the pitch of ſupreme excellence. The firſt ſort are not worthy the pains of making a reply; and theſe laſt, I am afraid, don't propoſe to themſelves any real improvement from what they read, but rather the gratification of a heated and elevated fancy. But I would have ſuch viſionaries reflect that the avoiding vice is the firſt natural ſtep we take in purſuing virtue: and unleſs the difficulties and obſtacles that ariſe from head-ſtrong paſſion and corrupt habits are removed at our ſetting out, we ſhall never make the leaſt progreſs to-

wards

wards the height of virtue we aſpire after. What rule of conduct then can an example afford us, that is beyond the reach of human capacity to imitate? And how ſhall we be ever able to ſhun the conſequences of vice and folly, to which we are all in ſome degree ſubject, and theſe readers among the reſt, when our whole time is employed in contemplating ſuch objects as have no defect either in point of underſtanding or manners?

SOME readers too will perhaps be diſpleaſed at the quarrel between Mrs. du Tour and the coachman; but there cannot be a better argument in its vindication, than its containing an excellent moral, vaſtly extenſive, and ſuited to a great number of individuals in all ſtations.

THE reflections this quarrel introduces have a viſible tendency to create in the mind an abhorrence of ſuch vulgar ſcenes, which we are daily witneſſes of in real life; and to aſpire after delicacy that will make us incapable of behaving in a manner ſo repugnant to good ſenſe, and ſo contrary to all our ideas of true politeneſs.

THEY, who indulge a brutal behaviour are not confined to the lower claſſes, to whom a want of education, a want of the very means of cultivating and humaniſing the mind, may be ſome excuſe. They are even rivaled by ſome amongſt the great, who make one grand privilege of their ſuperior ſtation to conſiſt in the right they pretend to have of acting beneath it at pleaſure.

PERSONS of this depraved taſte can only be ſhamed out of a habit ſo mean and contemptible; which cannot be better done, than by repreſenting it in its own light; and one that is incapable of being wrought upon this way, muſt be entirely loſt to all ſenſe of ingenuity.

AS to this tranſlation, I have not much to offer. When I read the original, I thought it would admit of an Engliſh dreſs, that might do juſtice to the fine ſpirit that reigns throughout. With this view, and to give my female readers eſpecially a piece, ſo worthy of their attention, entire and in ſome meaſure perfect, I immediately ſet about it. How I have ſucceeded in my attempt, the public muſt determine; and the reception they give it will ſufficiently declare their ſentiments.

THE

THE VIRTUOUS ORPHAN.

PART I.

I AM ſurprized, Madam, to find that the few incidents of my life, which made up part of the converſation the laſt time I did myſelf the honour to ſpend ſome days at your rural retreat, ſhould have ſo far raiſed your curioſity, as to make you intreat me to give you the whole. My hiſtory is indeed remarkable: but I am a very improper perſon to write it, except you will tell me where I muſt learn a ſtile:——It is true, indeed, the world once thought I had wit; but it was of that kind, I believe, which however agreeable to the ear in converſation, looſes all its ſmartneſs in the reading. When a celebrated beauty ſpeaks, tho' ſhe has ever ſo little wit, it will be thought ſuperior. Men don't know how to ſet a value upon what we ſay, for while they gaze with delight upon an agreeable object, what ſhe ſays is improved by what they ſee. I have ſeen a lady whoſe converſation was thought all enchantment; her expreſſions incomparable; her turns vivacity, and delicacy itſelf; and while ſhe ſpoke, pleaſure ſate ſmiling on every countenance. But alas! ſhe was ſuddenly ſeized with the ſmall-pox, and was extremely pitted: what a change! the poor lady has loſt all her charms, and her converſation is

dwindled into mere impertinent chit-chat. You ſee how much her fine ſenſe was owing to the ſuperior attractions of beauty; and really, I think, this was my caſe; for my eyes, I believe, have had more wit than I.

How many times have I caught myſelf ſaying things that have given me pain upon reflection; that would never have ſtood trial without the external charms of blooming youth, and the pleaſing air that accompanied them? Theſe alone gained all my applauſe for that which the ſmall-pox would have reduced into its intrinſic worth, mere idle impertinence.

I HAVE juſt mentioned a ſtile, but if you aſk what that is, really the queſtion will remain unanſwered. But if I do not know what a ſtile is, how ſhould I write a good one? I think I have heard you commend my letters, and on that account I intend to imitate them.——The freedom allowed in the epiſtolary kind of writing will give me a licence to ſet down whatever ideas occur to my mind, and as I ſhall lie under no reſtraint, I intend, as I am grown very fond of reflection, to follow my own inclinations, and to be at liberty, either to go on with my narration, or deſcribe the ſituation of my mind, as beſt ſuits with my preſent humour.

FIFTEEN years ago I was unacquainted with every circumſtance of my birth, and had never been informed whether I was of a noble or mean extraction. A ſtage-coach, on the road to Bourdeaux, was attacked by villains in a place fit for ſuch black deſigns. Two gentlemen leapt out of the coach and made reſiſtance, but being overpowered by numbers were ſoon murdered, after having wounded ſome of the aſſaſſins. Two women in the coach, with the poſtilion and coachman, ſhared the ſame unhappy fate; and there only remained alive a canon of

Séns,

Sens, and I, (a miſerable orphan!) who ſeemed to be between two and three years old. The canon fled, while I, who had fallen down in the coach, was ſcreaming and crying in the moſt dreadful manner, being half ſmothered under the body of one of the women, who, wounded and unable to ſupport herſelf, fell upon me, and in her expiring agonies almoſt cruſhed me to death. The horſes ſtood as ſtill as if they had been dead too, whilſt I remained in this deplorable ſituation, filling the air with inceſſant ſhrieks, without being able to diſengage myſelf.

YOU muſt obſerve, that one of the perſons killed in the coach was young and beautiful, of about twenty years of age, and dreſſed like a perſon of quality; the other ſeemed to be forty, and had the appearance of a chambermaid. If one of theſe was my mother, it was certainly the lady, becauſe the likeneſs between her and me, tho' diſfigured by death, and ſtained with blood, was too ſtriking not to be taken notice of by the perſons who ſaw her corps, and compared the features of her face with mine. Beſides, my dreſs was remarkably genteel and my linnen extremely fine, which rendered it very improbable that I ſhould be the daughter of a chambermaid.

I FORGOT to tell you, that a footman belonging to one of the gentlemen in the coach, tho' mortally wounded, fled croſs the fields, till growing weak with loſs of blood, he fell down at the entrance of a neighbouring village, where he died without telling to whom he belonged. All they could draw from him before he expired, was, that his maſter and miſtreſs were juſt murdered.

WHILST I was ſtruggling and crying under the body of the young lady, five or ſix gentlemen who were riding by, ſeeing ſome perſons lying dead near the coach, and hearing the cries of a child within, ſtopped at this terrible ſpectacle; either from that

curioſity, which ſuch ſhocking ſcenes are apt to inſpire, or from a charitable deſign of giving me their aſſiſtance. When looking into the coach they ſaw the bodies of the two women, where, by my cries, they judged I was alſo; ſome of them, (as they ſince have owned) were abſolutely for withdrawing, but the others, touched with compaſſion for me, ſtopt them, and alighting came firſt to the coach, while the reſt followed. Here they were ſtruck with a new ſcene of horror; the lady lay with one ſide of her face upon mine, which ſhe had bathed with blood, one arm preſſed me cloſe to her boſom, while her head reclined upon mine; by which poſture ſhe ſeemed as if ſhe had been taking a laſt embrace, and was loth to bid me an eternal adieu. They removed the lady, forced me from her arm, and took me out of the coach almoſt drowned in blood.

AFTER this, they conſulted what ſhould be done with me. They ſaw at ſome diſtance a ſmall village, where they reſolved to take me; and accordingly gave me to one of their ſervants, who carried me thither, wrapped up in his cloak. Their deſign was to put me into the hands of the vicar, that he might ſeek out a perſon willing to take care of me. But this gentleman, to whom all the inhabitants were ready to conduct them, was gone to viſit another clergyman, and there was nobody at home but his ſiſter, and two maid-ſervants. This lady was a perſon of the ſtricteſt piety and virtue: ſhe was affected with the diſmal ſtory, took me into the houſe, and promiſed to perſuade her brother to keep me; and had all the above particulars ſet down by a ſcrivener of the place.

AT laſt the gentlemen who brought me thither, contributed to raiſe a ſmall ſum, which they gave to the vicar's ſiſter for my uſe, and then took their leave.

IT

IT is from this lady I received all these particulars, the reading of which I do not doubt has filled you with horror. Sure never did any person enter upon life with greater misfortunes! I had lost those dear relations from whom I received my being, at an age when their care was needful to support my tender frame, and sow the seeds of virtue in my heart. But I was insensible of my loss, and was too young to know the dismal situation I was in.

I NEED not mention what became of the coach, or the poor murdered travellers, since that is foreign to my own history.——Some of the assassins were apprehended three or four days after for another robbery. But what added to my misfortunes, was, that these villains had found nothing either in the coach, or the cloaths of those they had assassinated, that could reveal the secret of my birth. In vain the stage-coach register was searched; it could only inform us, that a gentleman and a lady, (whose names, sounding like those of foreigners, could afford us no light in the affair, it being likely they had concealed their real names;) we could only learn, I say, that a gentleman and lady had taken five places in the coach, three for themselves and a child, and two more for a footman and a chambermaid. Thus the secret of my birth became impenetrable; and, deprived at one stroke of every person, whom affection or kindred would have obliged to assist me, the charity of mankind became my only support.

THE greatness of my misfortune procured me the charitable protection of the good vicar, who consented to keep me. People came to see me from all the neighbouring towns; for I was become an object of curiosity, as well as pity. The superstitious were desirous to examine the features of my face, and the lines in my little hands, and foolishly imagined they saw there my sad adventures writ in

legible characters. Every body took a kind of romantic fancy to me: they thought me pretty and my air engaging: and you can't imagine how much theſe natural accompliſhments were to my advantage; or how noble and delicate it rendered the tenderneſs which I inſpired. They could not have careſſed a little unfortunate princeſs with greater reſpect, or a more becoming and graceful air. The ladies, eſpecially, intereſted themſelves in my misfortunes, and were continually making me preſents of the fineſt and genteeleſt dreſſes, in which they ſtrove to outvye each other.

THE vicar has often ſaid, that for a long time he never heard thoſe ladies amidſt all the favours they heaped upon me, uſe the word *charity*; the word was too harſh, and therefore ſhocked the delicacy of their ſentiments—whenever they ſpoke of me, it was in the politeſt and tendereſt terms———They never called me *the poor Orphan*, but it was always *that lovely child*.———If they mentioned my parents, they were foreigners, and without doubt of the firſt rank in their own country—it could not be otherwiſe—and they were as ſure of it, as if they had been eye-witneſſes of every thing they were pleaſed to imagine.—There was a ſtory given out about me, which had been amplified by the extravagancies of every one that told it, and of the truth of which they were afterwards as fully convinced, as if they had not been the authors of it themſelves. But alas! all things come to an end; and the fineſt ſentiments have their period, as well as every thing elſe. As my adventure grew ſtale, it ceaſed to ſtrike their minds—A habit of ſeeing me diſſipated the imaginations which had been ſo beneficial to me; their ſublime and generous ideas were forgot, and the tender ſatisfaction they took in ſeeing, in loving, and admiring me, appeared no more in their countenances.

tenances. As theſe inclinations took their riſe from a capricious fancy and a love of novelty, it is not very ſtrange that in ſix months time, their *charming little creature*, their *lovely infant*, ſhould become *a poor unhappy Orphan*, to whom they no longer ſcrupled to uſe the word *charity*. The clergy in the neighbourhood recommended me to them as a proper object of their concern; but alas! the religion of the ladies was of much leſs ſervice to me than their extravagance had been; for I made little or no advantage of it: and had not the vicar and his ſiſter conceived the tendereſt affection for me, I muſt have been miſerable indeed. Their concern increaſed as faſt as the others cooled; and I have reaſon to be thankful, that tho' robbed of a father and mother, I found in theſe two pious perſons all the affection that could be hoped for from thoſe dear relatives.

Mr. de Roſand, for that was the name of my benefactor, was a gentleman of a good family, and formerly enjoyed an eſtate which was exhauſted by a tedious law-ſuit. However his living brought him in a handſome ſubſiſtence, and he knew how to be contented without enjoying many of the ſuperfluities of life.—Pride and oſtentation he was an utter ſtranger to—His generoſity and the agreeable gaity of his temper, in ſpite of his age, made him beloved by all his acquaintance; and he knew how to keep up the two characters of the accompliſhed gentleman, and the judicious divine.

Mrs. de Roſand was a lady of good ſenſe, free from affectation, and, tho' an old maid, had ſuch a ſweet diſpoſition, ſuch true politeneſs and undiſſembled goodneſs, as abundantly recompenſed the want of thoſe external charms which had been deſtroyed by the ſmall-pox, ſhe being extremely ſeamed by it.

THESE were the perſons who gave me my education; to which I owe that virtue which has ſupported me under all my afflictions, and raiſed me from the loweſt and moſt miſerable condition to my preſent ſtation——We lived in the greateſt harmony—— Their affection for me knew no bounds; and I, in my turn, honoured and loved them as my parents. The houſe we dwelt in was one of the moſt antique buildings I ever ſaw; it had for ſome ages paſt belonged to the vicars of the place; the rooms were ſpacious and numerous, but the cielings low. We had behind the houſe a pretty commodious garden, a beautiful ſylvan ſcene, which ſeemed rather the product of nature than of art; there was fruit in abundance of every kind, which grew promiſcuouſly amongſt other trees, ſo that they all together formed a thick and ſhady grove.—— The vine ſupported his feeble branches by encircling the oak, and the flowers ſeemed ſcattered with a careleſs hand over the verdant turf; thoſe whoſe tender ſtalk were liable to be broke down by unfriendly feet, crept in cluſters round the trunks of trees, while the woodbine and jeſſamine were made to riſe above, and twine amongſt the branches. The trees were never pruned, but in order to make them fruitful, or to let in the proſpect of the fine meadow, or the far diſtant hills; which, ſeeming to mingle with the clouds, formed a delightful horizon. We had no anſwering platforms, no cut walks, nor any thing like that ſtudied affectation of regularity, which diſguſts the eye by a repetition of uniformity, and a conſtant ſameneſs of deſign: for it was a maxim with Mr. de Roſand, that nothing but what is natural can be pleaſing to the ſubjects of nature, nor can art any farther delight than as it reſembles it. The agreeable intermixture

mixture of opening and ſhade was contrived with ſuch exquiſite art, as not only to appear natural, but to let in or exclude the proſpect of the adjacent country to the advantage of the whole ſcene.

OPPOSITE the middle door of the houſe was a long ſhady walk, which extended itſelf to the bottom of a piece of paſture ground behind the garden; and at the foot of ſeveral of the trees were raiſed ſeats of earth covered with camomile. When fatigued with ſevere ſtudy, Mr. de Roſand took delight in relaxing his thoughts with working here, and acting the part of a laborious gardener; an employment he choſe, at once to preſerve his health, and recreate his mind. He committed the management of his kitchen garden and vineyard to a poor labourer in the neighbourhood, whom he had releaſed from priſon by paying a debt for him, and whom, nevertheleſs, he rewarded well for his labour.

THIS good man began every day with paying a grateful homage to the ſupreme being, in which we all joined: after breakfaſt, his ſiſter and I worked with our needles, played upon the ſpinnet, or amuſed ourſelves with reading; and in the afternoon we walked in the garden to ſee Mr. de Roſand work, and be entertained with his converſation. In the evening this pattern of benevolence acted the part of an arbitrator of the differences of his contending neighbours, which he was frequently ſo happy as to adjuſt to the ſatisfaction of all parties concerned; and after ſupper concluded the day as he began it.

THIS worthy gentleman began early to ſhew his zeal for my happineſs, by eſtabliſhing in my mind the niceſt ſentiments of virtue and honour. He repreſented religion in a light, which made it appear all amiable and lovely, and as the higheſt happineſs of a rational being: he painted the ſubſtantial pleaſures of conſcious innocence, the exquiſite happineſs

of a mind that can ſurvey itſelf with tranquility and ſelf-approbation, in ſuch pleaſing colours, as perfectly charmed me. The pleaſure that ſparkled in his venerable countenance, and the extreme delight he took in talking on theſe ſubjects, informed me that he was no ſtranger to this kind of happineſs; and that he was only deſcribing the actual ſituation of his own upright mind. His good ſenſe made him above the ſuperſtition and bigotry, too common even amongſt the pious and the learned. He never thought a man more religious, for being leſs ſociable than his neighbours; and, therefore, could never bear to hear the moſt delightful employment of the ſoul, repreſented in the gloomy light and forbidding language of moſt of our clergy. Religion, my dear Marianne, ſaid he, and ill-nature are entirely incompatible: it never was deſigned to abridge the innocent pleaſures of life. We are not to ſcorn and ſpurn back the favours of indulgent heaven; but with gratitude and thankfulneſs to uſe them. Take notice, my dear, would he ſay, as we were walking ſometimes in the garden, what a vaſt profuſion of delight nature has ſpread around us! But if we call off our thoughts from the larger landſcape, and view the minuteſt part of this verdant ſcene, or the ſmalleſt inſects which in buſy millions fly over our heads, our ſurprize will ariſe in proportion to our attention. See this ſame earth gives the various colours to every flower, and ſupplies the different fragrance of the jonquil and the roſe; it feeds with equal impartiality the talleſt elm and the meaneſt ſhrub, the fineſt plant and the moſt noxious weed. Then he would take up a flower, and enter into a curious deſcription of its mechaniſm, while the moſt ordinary objects, which were a moment before unregarded, appeared full of wonders, which I longed to be acquainted with.——Thus he led me through

a

a delightful labyrinth to the first cause, while I listened with the utmost eagerness and attention; till at last he would break out into a rapture, O thou overflowing fountain of goodness! how soon are we lost in the contemplation of thy works! how exquisite is the delight thou hast prepared for man!

THESE early instructions gave me a habit of thinking, which served as a counterballance to my natural sprightliness and gaiety. They improved and entertained me, and I do not know if I was not more happy in this rural life, than I am now in my present elevated situation: however, this is certain, that I feel a wonderful satisfaction in bringing these past scenes to my remembrance.

MRS. de Rosand was not behindhand with her brother in her care of my education. She taught me every thing necessary for a young lady to learn. She loved me most tenderly, and I remember that many times I have seen her look upon me, with a moving softness in her countenance, and then burst into tears, at the remembrance of my disasters, till I have felt the same emotion; and charmed with this proof of her friendship, have thrown my arms about her neck, and with the tendereſt embraces mingled my tears with hers. A country vicar's sister is commonly an aukward, untoward, unbred creature: But Mrs. de Rosand was perfectly the reverse; she was polite and virtuous; her behaviour free and easy: she was enough concerned for my happiness to tell me faithfully of my faults, and to consult the least painful way of doing it: she did it always without witnesses, and made me sensible of the reasonableness of her reproof, in a manner so friendly, that instead of disgusting me, it heightened my esteem and affection for her. Happy would it be for children if parents would take this

method! and inſtead of frightning them into their duty, by gentle methods fix it in their hearts.

I WAS about fifteen, when one of Mr. de Roſand's relations, who had no other heir than he and his ſiſter, writ from Paris that he was dangerouſly ill. This gentleman had already given them frequent information of his ill ſtate of health; but in this letter he intreated them with the greateſt earneſtneſs and importunity to let him ſee, at leaſt one of them, once more before he died, and to be as expeditious as poſſible in giving him this ſatisfaction. But as Mr. de Roſand placed his delight in performing the duties of his function, he determined not to leave his cure, and therefore he ſent his ſiſter.

SHE had no deſign, at firſt, to take me with her; but a day or two before ſhe ſet out for this journey, ſeeing me look uneaſy, and obſerving that I ſighed, Take courage, Marianne, ſaid ſhe, ſince you dread ſo much my abſence, I won't be againſt your going with me, if I can prevail upon my brother to conſent to it. I have a proſpect in view for you; and have ſome thoughts of putting you to a tradeſwoman, to teach you ſome buſineſs that you approve of; for it is time to think of doing ſomething. Our lives are precarious, we ought, therefore, to look forward to futurity: as long as my brother and I live, we ſhall be ready to aſſiſt you to the utmoſt of our power, not to mention what we ſhall leave you when we die: but that will not be ſufficient to maintain you, for we have not much to leave. I don't believe the relation I am going to ſee is rich; and we ought to chuſe ſuch a ſtation for you as will be a ſettlement. I tell you this, my dear Marianne, becauſe you are now at years of diſcretion. And methinks, I would fain have the comfort, before I die, of ſeeing you married to ſome honeſt man, or at leaſt in a ſituation that will not make our deaths ſo great

great a loſs as it muſt be, if we are ſnatched away before you are provided for.

I WAS ſo touched with this diſcourſe, that I threw myſelf into her arms;——I could not bear the thought of loſing her without giving way to a ſudden tranſport of grief. I wept, nor could ſhe reſtrain the painful pleaſure of ſympathizing with me, and accompanying me with her tears.—— At that inſtant Mr. de Roſand came in, and looking at me with an air of benevolence, What is the matter, ſiſter, ſaid he, I believe Marianne is crying? Upon this, ſhe told him the ſubject of our converſation, and the deſign ſhe had to take me with her to Paris. With all my heart, returned he; but if ſhe ſtays there I fear I ſhall never ſee her more; and this is a thought I have not yet learnt how to ſupport. I love the dear child moſt tenderly; we have had the care of her education, and have ſpared no pains to fulfil the delightful, important taſk. Now I am grown old, and my grey heirs tell me I muſt not expect to live long: but, O my dear Marianne, my dear child, how ſhall I be able to bid you a final adieu, and to part never to meet again in this world.

NOTHING could be more moving than his converſation:——I could make no other reply, but ſighs and tears, the natural rhetoric of an oppreſſed and afflicted heart. The good man coming up to me, Marianne, ſaid he, you ſhall go with my ſiſter, ſince it is for your advantage, which I ought to prefer to every other conſideration. But, my dear, never venture to do any thing without our advice: and if my ſiſter cannot place you well at Paris, you ſhall return back with her, and we'll try what can be done for you here.

I WILL not repeat all he ſaid to me before my departure——I muſt abridge, for theſe little particulars

culars of my youth have no doubt tired you: they are not very intereſting; and beſides I long to come to things of greater conſequence. I have many adventures to relate; and I ought to have a high value for you, to engage me to enter upon a hiſtory which will be ſo very long. I muſt ſcribble over a great deal of paper; but I won't think of it, leſt my indolence ſhould take the alarm: let us then proceed, and never mind it.

THE thoughts of ſeeing the world, of being admired, and converſing with men of wit and faſhion, filled my mind, and diſplayed my inward ſatisfaction in the vivacity of my countenance. Blind to the misfortunes I was ſoon to be involved in, I was impatient to leave that ſafe, that innocent and peaceful dwelling. But before we ſet out this pleaſure palled and ſickened upon my mind, and theſe imaginary ſatisfactions vaniſhed; and when the day of our departure arrived I grew dull, and could hardly refrain from tears. What a ſtrange contradiction are we to ourſelves! We are frequently all gaity and mirth, when in a moment the ſcene changes, and grief and preſſing anxiety load our ſpirits. I could ſee no cauſe for the ſatisfaction I had before taſted: I ſighed, and almoſt without knowing what I did, leſt the hurry my friends were in, we being almoſt ready to ſet out, and ſtept into the garden to indulge my growing melancholy. As I was walking down the viſto, which extended itſelf into the fields behind the garden, I heard the vicar call me; when ſtarting from my revery, I turned about and ſaw him coming towards me. Where have you been, Marianne, ſaid he, as we met, the coach is ready: however, we may make them wait a little: then deſiring me to ſit, My dear child, reſumed he, thou art going to leave me, I fear I ſhall ſee thee no more

My heart is full——I am all tenderneſs.——I feel the affection of a father that is about to part with his only child. Indeed we have been to thee inſtead of parents. Thy education has been my greateſt pleaſure. And which, though I ſhould never ſee thee more, I ſhall always think on with comfort. I found thee early improve in ſentiments of virtue, and with delight embraced it. How vaſt my ſatisfaction!—I have endeavoured to make thee know thyſelf, have taught thee to ſearch thy own heart in order to form a juſt opinion of thy merit: value thyſelf upon thy purity of ſoul and conſcious virtue; eſteem a tender heart, eaſily moved with the miſeries of others, and apt to take the impreſſion of their calamities, as a bleſſing infinitely preferable to the greateſt affluence without theſe humane diſpoſitions. Theſe qualifiations will render thee truly amiable.——Thou art, indeed, lovely beyond deſcription! but, oh, take care, that theſe charms are not a ſnare to thee: for if theſe exterior accompliſhments ſhould betray thee to loſe thy purity of heart and inward rectitude, thou wilt have reaſon to wiſh thou hadſt been as deformed as thou art now lovely. Believe me, penances and auſterities can never compenſate for the want of moral goodneſs; ſince, as I have often told thee, and now repeat it, it is all that is worthy in man, all that is amiable in God himſelf, the perfect pattern of ſpotleſs purity and conſummate goodneſs.——Never be aſhamed to acknowledge thy obligations to the divine being, nor to love him who is the moſt lovely of all beings. May his goodneſs ſurround thee; may he be thy
de in the ſlippery paths of youth. When thou
poſed to change thy ſtate, prefer the honeſt,
hy man, who loves thee enough to tell thee
but ſhun the flatterer; and above all deteſt
ch that would rob thee of thy innocence.

I intreat thee, my dear child, never to venture upon any thing of moment without our advice; write often, but never forget to do it when you ſtand in need of our counſel. Adieu, my dear, dear Marianne.———

AFTER a tender ſalute and many tears we parted, and endeavoured by a free and eaſy converſation to diſſipate the gloom that ſo affectionate an interview had occaſioned: we ſoon grew chearful and agreeable company, and, after a pleaſant journey, at laſt arrived at Paris: but were obliged to paſs through almoſt the whole city before we reached the houſe of my dear friend's relation.

MY ſurpriſe at the ſight of this noiſy and populous town, at the multitude of the ſtreets, and the magnificence of the buildings, exceeds all deſcription. It was to me the empire of the moon: I was no more myſelf———I ſtared at every thing with aſtoniſhment in my looks, but remembered nothing that I ſaw.———However the length of the city made me come to myſelf; and I began to enjoy, with a pleaſing ſatisfaction, the objects of my amazement; glad to find myſelf in a world ſo new, and ſo different from my expectations. The air I breathed ſeemed to revive my ſpirits; there was a kind of ſympathy between my ideas and the objects that preſented themſelves to my ſight; and I could not help imagining, that this vaſt crowd of varieties contained an inexhauſtible ſource of pleaſures hitherto untaſted. In ſhort, I thought every delight centered here in its higheſt perfection. Pray, was this the common effect of inexperience, or a pr that here would lie my future ſcene of acti

WE found that the perſon we went about twenty-four hours before our arri was not all; every apartment of his hou up; and tho' he had ſeveral offices under

it was ſaid his debts far exceeded his eſtate.——— How they made it appear, I cannot ſay, for it has ſlipt my memory. All I know of it is, that we were not able to get admittance into his houſe, that all his effects were ſeized, and that after many debates in the compaſs of three months, we were at laſt convinced that there was not a penny to be hoped for; and that it was a pity he had not left more for the diſcharge of his debts.

HAD we not then made a fine journey of it? Mrs. de Roſand, however, behaved with prudence and moderation: ſhe was concerned indeed at our diſappointment, but it was purely on my account. She had flattered herſelf and me with the hopes, that this money would contribute to ſettle me in a ſtation, which would be an agreeable ſupport after their deceaſe. But alas! what misfortunes were about to befal me! the dear woman at this juncture was taken with a violent fever; her illneſs increaſed daily, and what at that time added to our perplexity was, that the money we brought with us was almoſt exhauſted, and Mr. de Roſand, who had nothing but his living to depend upon, could not ſupply us with any more without the greateſt difficulty. Her ſickneſs overwhelmed us both with care; and was to me a moſt inſupportable affliction.———What a moving ſight! How tender were the ſentiments of her heart! Never had ſhe ſhewn ſo much affection for me before! for ſhe never had ſeen me in ſo deplorable, ſo wretched a ſituation. Though almoſt ſuffocated with my grief, I dried up my tears, and interrupted her ſighs with a thouſand tender careſſes, the natural tranſports of a grateful afflicted heart. My ſoul overflowed with love and gratitude; and I intreated her in the moſt melting language to lay aſide her concern for me, and conſult only the preſervation of a life, which then appeared infinitely dearer to me than my

my own. I writ to Mr. de Roſand, and informed him of the melancholy news of his ſiſter's illneſs, and the ſtraits to which we muſt ſoon be reduced: but there are times when unſeen diſaſters fall upon us without intermiſſion; and we are overwhelmed by a ſwift ſucceſſion of misfortunes. Thus it was at preſent: for this gentleman, going to ſee one of his brother clergymen, ſix weeks after our departure, had the misfortune to fall from his horſe (a dangerous accident for an old man) and was not able to ſtir out of his bed, when he received my letter. This was followed by another fatal event: this worthy, this pious gentleman, was obliged to appear before his ſuperiors, to vindicate himſelf from a charge of hereſy, which was preferred againſt him; and though nothing was proved, except his having a fine collection of the works of the moſt celebrated Proteſtant divines, he was obliged to reſign his living. Thus was he made a ſacrifice to the avarice and cruelty of a prieſt, who made uſe of his generous ſentiments, his univerſal benevolence and love to mankind, to ruin him, and get into his living. The remembrance of theſe things brings tears into my eyes; and I am obliged, dear Madam, to break off, in order to diſſipate the too painful ideas which croud upon my mind.

THE earth is ſurely an abode very foreign to virtuous minds, ſince they are perpetually tortured upon it. In this exigence many of his pretended friends forſook him, in ſpite of all the obligations of gratitude. But a ſet of gentlemen of his acquaintance embraced this opportunity to ſhow their regard for his diſtinguiſhed merit, by offering to contribute to his ſupport: and they further entreated he would make uſe of their houſes, till their intereſt ſhould accommodate his affairs, and place him, if poſſible, in his former ſtation.

We almoſt deſpaired of the ſiſter's recovery, when we heard this news from the brother.——At reading the letter ſhe gave a loud ſhriek and fainted; whilſt I, drowned in tears, ran to give her my aſſiſtance. She came to herſelf, but did not ſhed a tear. From that moment I obſerved in her a couragious reſignation to the divine will; her heart was compoſed and ſteady; the uneaſy fondneſs ſhe before had expreſſed for me, became inſtantly a virtuous tenderneſs, which reſigned me into his hands, who can make the moſt melancholy events ſubſervient to our happineſs. When ſhe was come to herſelf and we were alone, ſhe called me to her with a faint voice, and making me ſit upon the bed, told me ſhe deſired to ſpeak to me. Give me leave, my friend, to relate here a part of her diſcourſe, the remembrance of which is ſtill dear to me, for theſe were the laſt words ſhe ſpoke.

My dear Marianne, ſaid ſhe, I have no more a brother, for though he is not dead to the world, to you and I he is. His friends, I doubt not, will contribute to his ſupport while he lives: for my part I ſhall ſoon be no more. I have placed my thoughts on a better world. But in what circumſtances do I leave thee? Oh how diſtracting is the thought! how many the cares in which thou wilt be involved!—But it is God's will—this comforts me under the diſtreſſing circumſtance, ſad and frightful as it is. His deſigns, though impenetrable, are doubtleſs more to thy advantage than any I can propoſe.——Perhaps I ſhall lie a-while in this lingering condition.——Tho', it may be, the firſt fainting fit may carry me off. I dare not give thee the reſt of my money, thy youth and artleſs innocence will render thee eaſily deceived. I will put it in the hands of the monk, who viſits me, and deſire him to diſpoſe of it to thy advantage. He is related to me. If he does not come

to

to ſee me to-day, thou ſhalt ſeek him to-morrow, that I may ſpeak to him. After this ſingle precaution, I have only one thing to recommend to thee, which is to be ever inflexibly virtuous and honeſt. Conſtantly remember thy education, and be aſſured thou ſhalt poſſeſs the richeſt, the nobleſt treaſure that can be left thee; the riches of the mind, the proper happineſs of a reaſonable being.——A pleaſure of the ſame nature with that of angels, and all the bleſt above. 'Tis true, my dear child, it will not prevent thy wanting the comforts of this life; nor thy being reduced to great ſtraits even to ſupport it. Tho' it is not improbable, but that God will reward thee here. Virtuous minds are ſcarce; but thoſe who eſteem virtue are not; for there are a thouſand occaſions in life, wherein we need the aſſiſtance of the upright. If a man marries an honeſt and prudent, tho' a poor woman, no diſhonour attends his choice: but tho' ſhe be beautiful, rich, and of noble deſcent, and yet deſtitute of virtue, ſhame will be the portion ſhe brings to her huſband. Men will always be of this mind. The love of virtue is natural to them. It appears amiable, even to thoſe who have not reſolution to embrace it. Beſides it fills the heart with comfort, and an inward ſatisfaction; it is the ſweeteſt repaſt to thoſe who live in indigence and want; a repaſt more exquiſite than all the luxuries of the epicure. But the diſtreſſes of this life are but ſhort! the ſcene my dear, will ſoon change, when oppreſſed virtue will appear triumphant!—— When immortal glories and unfading delight will recompenſe its painful ſufferings!—The ſcorners of virtue, who boaſt of their conqueſts, always condemn the women they ſeduce: they take advantage of their weakneſs; degrade, deſpiſe, and abandon them to reproach and miſery.——It is only for want of reflection that any woman grows lewd! the height

of

of folly and madneſs! It will not bear a moment's thought to chuſe, whether we would get rid of poverty, at the ſevere rate of loſing the tranquillity of our minds; and the delightful expectations of endleſs, unfading happineſs at the ſevere rate of being deſpiſed——At the ſevere rate of being abandoned here to contempt and miſery, and hereafter deprived of———

HERE ſhe began to faulter, unable to finiſh the reſt. You are curious to know what anſwer I made. Indeed I could make none —— I was not able to utter a word; her diſcourſe and the thoughts of her death rendered me ſpeechleſs, and had ſwallowed up all the faculties of my ſoul: I preſſed her hand with eagerneſs between mine, and kiſſed it a thouſand times, whilſt my eyes ſtreamed with inceſſant tears. However, I loſt not a ſyllable of what ſhe ſaid, for it made ſuch an impreſſion upon my mind, that, I believe, I have repeated it word for word.

I MUST now come to the uſe I made of it. How many follies have I to relate! How ſeldom are we wiſe till there is ſcarcely any merit in being ſo! Why do we ſay, that a perſon is at years of diſcretion, when it is rather the age of madneſs and folly? How improper the expreſſion! for when firſt we enjoy our reaſon, it is a beautiful jewel often looked at, and much valued, but of little uſe; and its fine luſtre is thought only fit to be admired.———

I BEG, Madam, you would bear with theſe tranſient reflections; for I ſhall always take the liberty to introduce them, ſince the many follies I have been guilty of, give me a right to make uſe of them, as they are the product of my own experience.——— Now let us proceed.

AS Mrs. de Roſand had told me, that ſhe apprehended the next fainting fit would carry her off, I was too much concerned to go to bed that night, and,

and, therefore, ſat up with her. She ſlept pretty well till two in the morning, when I heard her groan. I ran to her bed; I ſpoke to her; but ſhe was no longer in a condition to anſwer me: ſhe took hold of my hand, and ſeemed expiring with a tender ſmile upon her countenance. Grief now took the entire poſſeſſion of my heart; the terror and anguiſh of my mind ſoon deprived me of my ſenſes, and I had a momentary reſpite from the agony in which I was involved: but my reflection, and my miſery returned together. Methought the world was a deſart, wherein I was left alone. I then found how tenderly I loved her, and recollected how affectionately ſhe had loved me.—Every diſtreſſing circumſtance was painted on my heart in ſuch lively colours, that I was almoſt diſtracted. O how much grief can enter into the human breaſt! how vaſt our capacity for miſery! and how great our ſenſibility!

My cries and lamentations awoke the family. The landlord and his wife knocked at our chamber door.———I opened it without knowing what I did.———They ſpoke to me; but my tears and ſighs were the only anſwer I could make. They ſoon knew the cauſe of my affliction, and went to ſuccour, if poſſible, the dear expiring woman. She lay motionleſs, and, diſtreſſing thought! who knows but ſhe was already gone! However, half an hour after, they were poſitive ſhe was dead. The ſervants came up with hurry and clamour. I fainted again, and was carried into the next room without perceiving it. When I came to myſelf, as if aſtoniſhed with the exceſs of my miſery, my tears ceaſed flowing, and I was denied the ſweet conſolation of venting my grief, and by thoſe friendly drops aſſuaging the anguiſh of my burſting, tortured heart. But I need not deſcribe my condition: you may more eaſily form an idea of this diſmal ſituation, than I expreſs it:

it: beſides the recital fills me with an inſupportable melancholy, and, on this account, I chuſe to break off.

PHILOSOPHY is of little ſervice when we are oppreſſed with ſuch terrible afflictions. Whilſt our minds are ſerene and undiſturbed, we reaſon upon the virtue of patience, and the government of our paſſions: we applaud our all-powerful arguments, and think them capable of maſtering and controlling the bittereſt afflictions. But when we are borne down by ſuch violent, ſuch terrible calamities; when we have loſt all that is dear, all that makes life deſirable, how can we ſupport the ſhock? we have not even the inclination to make head againſt the torrent of our ſorrows: we do not ſo much as ſtruggle, or catch at the help that offers; but give up all command of ourſelves, and are carried away by the violence of the ſtream, without once attempting to ſtand our ground. They who would give us a picture of human nature, very often deſcribe what we ſhould be, rather than what we are. Like the writers of romances, who, fond of every thing marvellous, neglect nature, and deſcribe their hero as wanting even the foibles which we are unavoidably liable to; for a perfect character is a very unnatural one: and, whatever theſe viſionaries may think, thoſe who ſpeak from their own experience are more likely to teach us the knowledge of our ſelves than the dreams of theſe noveliſts. But to return.

Now was I left alone, with no other guide than the experience of a girl of about fifteen. As Mrs. de Roſand had called me her niece, the perſons of the houſe gave me a verbal account of every thing they pretended was found about her: which would not have required a more formal proceeding, had they given me up the whole: but a part of the linnen was ſtolen, and ſome trifles; beſides from four hundred

dred livres, which I knew Mrs. de Roſand had left me, they had the conſcience to take half. I complained, indeed, but in ſuch mild terms, that it availed no more than my ſilence would have done. My grief made me inſenſible of every thing elſe: and as I had no friend, as I was deſtitute of the conſolation of any one to comfort me, and concern himſelf with my affairs, I had no regard to them my ſelf. This turn of mind put me into a ſtate reſembling tranquility: but, alas! how lamentable is ſuch a ſeeming calmneſs! indeed, the greateſt tranſports of rage and deſpair are leſs to be pitied.

EVERY one of the family ſeemed to intereſt themſelves in my misfortunes; eſpecially the landlord and his wife, who came, with a diſſembled compaſſion, to conſole me under a diſtreſs of which they had made their advantage: a ſort of people the world ſwarms with; for, generally, none expreſs a greater deſire of alleviating our troubles, than thoſe who cauſe, or get any thing by them.

I CONSENTED they ſhould ſell Mrs. de Roſand's cloaths for me, for which they gave me what they thought proper, and it was about a fortnight ſince my dear aunt, as they called her (but I would fain term her my dear mother, or rather my only *friend*, ſince there is no title but muſt yield to that; nor heart more tender, nor more unſhaken, than one inſpired by a true and ſolid friendſhip:) it was about a fortnight, I ſay, ſince my deareſt friend died, which I paſſed in her lodging without knowing or caring what would become of me; when the monk, whom I have already mentioned, came again to ſee how Mrs. de Roſand did. He was very ſorry to hear ſhe was dead; and as I was ſenſible he was the only man my dear friend had thought proper to intruſt with the ſecret of my birth; I could not help feeling a kind of ſecret ſatisfaction on ſeeing him come in.

He was touched with my misfortunes; the little care I took of myself in these heavy afflictions moved him extremely. He addressed himself to me in a very affecting manner, and set before me the dangers I ran in staying in that house alone, and without a friend to own or advise me: he told me it was a situation that exposed me to their artifices, who might make an advantage of my youth, my beauty, and inexperience. In short, he let me know, that, stupid with my grief, I had slept on the brink of a precipice, blind to the dangers that ought to have terrified me and employed all my thoughts. His discourse had its desired effect; it rouzed me from my lethargy of thought: I saw my danger, and trembled to think what would become of me. This inquietude raised a thousand terrors in my mind. Where shall I go? said I, all in tears: no soul on earth knows me: I am related to no one living: to whom shall I apply for help? or who is obliged to assist me? what shall I do when I leave this house? my money will not last long; besides, it may be taken from me, and this is the first time I ever had a sum to spend.

The good monk did not know what to answer. Methought I was become a burthen to him; and these are a sort of people, who, when they have once given you their advice, have done all they are able to do. To return into the country would have been a folly; I could have no asylum there: my dear friend Mr. de Rosand had sent us all his money, which we received with his last letter, and had nothing to do but to drag out a tedious life in dependance. There was then no resource on that side; and, indeed, my perplexity and terror almost made me distracted.

At last the monk, after having racked his invention, thought of a charitable and pious gentleman, who

was, he ſaid, entirely devoted to good works, and to whom he promiſed to recommend me the next day. But the next day would not do———I could not ſupport the thought of ſtaying any longer——— I wept———I lamented my condition———He offered to go——— I held him faſt———I threw myſelf at his feet———I intreated him to take me with him immediately———I could not bear the thought of his going without me. Oh! caſt me not into deſpair, ſaid I: what would you have me do here? They have already taken from me ſome of my money; to-night they will take the reſt——— they may convey me away——my honour and life are at ſtake———I dread every thing ———be aſſured, I can never have a moment's repoſe here———I will fly at all hazards: and, if you are indeed my friend, would not this afflict you?

THE monk was terribly embarraſſed, and finding he could not get rid of me, pauſed for a moment, and then calling for a pen and ink, wrote to the gentleman he had juſt mentioned. He read the letter to me. It was wrote in the moſt preſſing manner, and he conjured him by all the obligations of religion, to haſten to us with ſpeed.———God, ſaid he, has reſerved for you an act of charity the moſt precious, the moſt meritorious, and the moſt acceptable in his ſight, of any you ever did in your life. And to excite him more effectually, he mentioned my ſex, my age and beauty, with the fatal conſequences they might poſſibly produce, either from my own weakneſs, or the wickedneſs of others.

WHEN the letter was ſealed up, he ſent it as directed; and while we waited for an anſwer, I kept the monk in ſight, being fully reſolved not to lie that night in the houſe. I cannot tell you what it was

I apprehended, nor what was the reaſon my fears were ſo great. All I know of it is, that I took notice of my landlord's face, which I had not obſerved till then, and in his aſpect I read the moſt terrible things. That of his wife methought was ſurly and gloomy, and even the ſervants had the look of villains. In ſhort, every countenance there made me tremble. The moſt terrible ideas crowded into my mind, and I could not think of ſtaying, without thinking too of daggers, aſſaſſinations, robberies, being purſued and inſulted by villains; whilſt my blood froze at the dangers which my fancy painted to me: for whenever we ſet our imagination to work on ſuch gloomy ſcenes, our own ideas readily furniſh us with a variety of horrors, and all that is dreadful immediately appears in its moſt formidable terrors.

I was amuſing the monk with theſe black and melancholy thoughts, when the man, whom we had ſent with the letter, returned, and told us, that the gentleman's coach was waiting for us below; for he could neither write, nor come himſelf, becauſe he was engaged in buſineſs when he received it. I packed up my cloaths, and made haſte to ſave my life. I ordered my dreaded landlord and landlady to be called, and inſtantly diſcharged what was due. And, in reality, their looks were not the moſt engaging, and imagination had little to do to render them perfectly diſagreeable. This, however, is certain, that I have remembered their faces ever ſince. Methinks I ſee them ſtill, and could even draw their pictures.——I have, I believe, known ſome honeſt men, whom I have been at firſt ſight prejudiced againſt, only becauſe the air of their countenances ſeemed to reſemble theirs.

I WENT into the coach with the monk, and we ſoon arrived at the gentleman's houſe. He was between fifty and ſixty, yet ſufficiently genteel, very rich, and of a mild but grave countenance, which was predominant over a good complection, and a happy plight of body. He gave us a kind and free reception without compliment, or any other ceremony than embracing the monk; and then caſting his eyes upon me, deſired us both to ſit down.

MY heart fluttered; I was extremely embarraſſed and diſconcerted, and ſo out of countenance, that I durſt not even lift up my eyes: Come, ſaid the gentleman, taking the monk by the hand, and preſſing it with an air of devotion and reverence, come, let us ſee what is to be done for this poor unhappy girl; pray, Sir, relate more particularly her hiſtory. He inſtantly obeyed. Which done, the gentleman reſumed: How ſtrange are her adventures! how dreadful her ſituation! You were much in the right, father, continued he, when you told me I could not do a more meritorious action, than ſerving this unfortunate young creature: I am of the ſame opinion: and think too that ſhe has a thouſand times more need of help than any other of her ſex.——I am obliged to you for having pitched on me for that purpoſe.——I bleſs the happy moment in which you were inſpired with the reſolution of informing me of her ſituation and misfortunes; for I am ſenſibly touched with your narration.——But let us conſider what method we muſt take to extricate her out of her troubles. How old are you, child? added he, with an affectionate look. At this queſtion I could only ſigh, being unable to make any anſwer. After a ſhort pauſe, he reſumed, don't afflict yourſelf; take courage; I deſire nothing more than to ſerve you: God,

God, the ſovereign lord of all we enjoy, demands that we ſhould ſupply the neceſſitous, and feed the poor with the ſubſtance he has given us: tell me then, how old you are. I am about ſixteen, Sir, ſaid I. Really, reſumed he, turning towards the father, one would be apt to think her older: at firſt ſight one can't help obſerving ſomething to her advantage; the natural innocence and expreſſive ſimplicity of her countenance, give me a good opinion of the purity of her heart; and even ſhew ſhe is of noble extraction.——But indeed her misfortunes are very great. How impenetrable are the deſigns of providence! But let us now mind the main affair, continued he; as you have no fortune, we muſt know what ſort of employment you chuſe. Pray, had your deceaſed friend taken no reſolution on that head? She had, ſaid I, an intention of putting me out to learn ſome trade. Very well, replied he, I approve of her deſign: but do you likewiſe approve of it yourſelf; ſpeak freely: there are, perhaps, many things which may be more agreeable to you. For inſtance, I have a ſiſter, that is rich and of a ſweet diſpoſition, who has juſt loſt a ſervant, whom ſhe had a great eſteem for, and who, doubtleſs, if ſhe had lived with her till her death, would have left her ſomething conſiderable. If you are willing to go to ſervice, I am ſure my ſiſter will receive you with pleaſure.

This propoſal made me bluſh: Alas! Sir, ſaid I, tho' I am deſtitute of every thing, and tho' I don't know to whom I owe my birth, methinks I would chuſe to die, rather than to live with any body in ſo mean an employ; ſince, if my parents were alive, to all appearance I ſhould have domeſticks of my own, inſtead of being one myſelf. ——Liberty is one of the greateſt bleſſings that heaven can beſtow: a bleſſing that appears to me in-

finitely dearer than life itſelf.——My grief and confuſion here forced me to ſtop and wipe my eyes, and give way to a paſſion too violent to be reſtrained: however, I endeavoured to compoſe myſelf; and with a melancholy air, reſumed, interrupted with ſighs; Since I am obliged to work for my bread, I ſhall always prefer the meaneſt employment, provided I can be free, to the condition you propoſe, even tho' I ſhould make my fortune by it. My dear, ſaid he, don't afflict yourſelf, I approve of your thoughts; and am glad to find your ſentiments are not depreſſed with your circumſtances, and that in ſpite of all your afflictions, you retain an elevation of mind, which raiſes you above them. A little of this ſort of pride may be diſpenſed with, but you ought not to carry it too far: if you do, it will be very unreaſonable. Let the conjectures of your being born of noble parents be ever ſo probable, it will give you no eſtate, and you ought to regulate yourſelf according to that.——Conſider you have nothing——But, however, we ſhall follow the views of your departed friend.——'Tis true it will coſt more, becauſe your board muſt be paid for.——But no matter, you muſt be provided for this very day. I will take you to my linnen-draper, and there I know you will be welcome. Now are you ſatisfied? Yes, Sir, ſaid I, and never will forget your goodneſs. Be ſure you make your advantage of it, ſaid the monk, who had hitherto been ſilent, and let your conduct recompence this gentleman, for the care his piety induces him to take of you. I fear, replied he, in a devout and ſcrupulous tone, I ſhall have no merit in aſſiſting her, I am ſo much affected with her misfortunes. Then riſing up, Don't let us loſe time, continued he, it grows late: let us go to the gentlewoman I have mentioned. For you, father, you may retire, I ſhall give you

a good account of the truſt you have committed to my charge. Upon this the monk left us. I thanked him for his recommendation with a timorous voice; for I was extremely troubled. And my benefactor and I ſtept into the coach.

I WISH I could tell you all that paſſed in my mind, and how much I was affected with this converſation, of which I have told you but a very ſmall part; for it was filled up with many other diſagreeable and mortifying hints. It may not be improper, however, to tell you, that, young as I was, my temper was a little lofty. I had been educated with ſuch a tender indulgence, and had been always treated with ſuch reſpect, that a converſation of this kind was extremely ſhocking. The favours we receive from ſome men, are accompanied with ſuch an ill grace, as render them extremely mortifying. They had ſifted my miſery for an hour together. And the converſation ran upon nothing, but the compaſſion with which I inſpired them; the great merit it was to relieve me; and that religion demanded their care of me, as the greateſt object of pity, and the moſt forlorn and wretched creature living. At laſt followed a croud of proud, tho' ſeeming charitable reflections, and all the airs of perſons puffed up with an oſtentatious affectation of ſuperior piety. Never did charity dreſs its melancholy duties in ſo ſtately a garb. I was overwhelmed with ſhame; and all that ſelf-love, which is inſeparable from the human heart, ſeemed expiring.——— How grating is this kind of behaviour to an ingenuous mind! What ſeverer miſery can befal us than to be forced to depend on the help of ſuch perſons, whoſe tender mercies are cruelty? Is that charity which does not ſympathize with the miſerable? Is that charity, which begins with trampling upon our

ſelf-love, and never relieves the ſoul till it has wounded it in the tendereſt part? A pretty virtue indeed, which throws into deſpair thoſe who are the objects of it! O how unlike that goodneſs they pretend to practice! how ſublime, how tranſporting is the pleaſure of eaſing the aching heart! of diffuſing tranquility and joy through the tortured anxious ſoul! for can we help ſympathizing in the delight which we ourſelves inſpire? But how vaſtly are they miſtaken, who applaud themſelves, who ſtrut and ſwell with their imagined liberality, who make a boaſted ſhew of a few of the external acts of charity, without a principle of benevolence rooted in the heart! I would ſay to theſe pretenders to this virtue, when you ſo unmercifully inſiſt on a particular enumeration of all my miſeries; when you bring me face to face with the whole group of my misfortunes, of themſelves almoſt inſupportable; when the ceremonial of your queſtions, or rather of your burthenſome examination, precedes the aſſiſtance you are pleaſed to afford me; do you call that charity? I ſay, it is a behaviour brutal, barbarous and uncharitable, and cannot be the reſult of any generous ſentiment.

I HAVE now done. Let ſuch as need the information, make a good uſe of this leſſon. They may be ſure it comes in good part, ſince I ſpeak from my own experience.

To return. I was in the coach going to the draper's with this gentleman. I remember he was much more inquiſitive as we went, than he had been before the monk; and that I anſwered him in a voice low and ſorrowful, and was under ſuch reſtraint, that I durſt not move a limb: like a tender plant blaſted by the rude north win, I was ſhrunk up, and ſeemed to take no room in the coach. However, in ſpight of the melancholy in which

which I was involved, I was aſtoniſhed at theſe ſubjects he entertained me with; methought his converſation was very odd, that he ſoftened and grew mild of a ſudden, and inſtantly became more fawning than zealous, more generous than charitable. In ſhort, he was entirely changed.———

I AM ſorry to ſee you, my dear, under ſuch reſtraint, ſaid he, I can't bear to have you ſo reſerved; ſince, if you indulge it, it will ſoon grow into an averſion to me, tho' I am wholly at your ſervice. Our converſation with this monk has, no doubt, diſconcerted you. Theſe ſort of people have a rough harſh way of expreſſing themſelves, and we are ſometimes forced to imitate them: but I have naturally a tender heart, and wiſh you would look upon me as your friend, and as a man who intereſts himſelf in your affairs, and entreats you would repoſe an entire confidence in him. Do you hear? the only right I claim, is to give you, when you need it, a little friendly advice; which, I hope, will not keep you at any diſtance. Suppoſe, for example, I ſhould tell you, that you are young and handſome; and that theſe two fine endowments will expoſe you to the artifices of the firſt giddy brained young fellow that ſees you; and that it would be very wrong to hearken to his impertinence, becauſe it could be of no ſervice to you, and would not deſerve your attention. Let your views be only how to raiſe your fortune; and neglect nothing that will contribute to this great deſign. I know very well, that the fair, at your age, are delighted with the thoughts of charming every beholder. I don't doubt but you will be univerſally admired, whether you endeavour to make conqueſts or not: but never make it your buſineſs to pleaſe every body: you will find a thouſand pert little fellows, whom your

ſituation obliges you not to mind. What I tell you I'll aſſure you, does not proceed from an exceſs of ſeverity in me, continued he with a fawning ſmile, at the ſame time taking me with a free air by the hand. No, Sir, ſaid I. Then obſerving I had no gloves, I will buy you ſome, ſaid he, they preſerve the hands, and that is worth minding, when they happen to be ſo perfectly lovely. Upon which he bid the coachman ſtop, and bought ſeveral pair for me, which I tried on with his aſſiſtance; for he would, by all means, help me. I let him do it, tho' I bluſh'd at my obedience without knowing why. I was unaccountably uneaſy, and doubted what this might ſignify.

I MENTION all theſe little particulars, Madam, becauſe they really are not ſo inſignificant as may be thought at firſt ſight.

WE arrived at laſt at the draper's, who ſeemed to me a good ſort of a woman, and who received me on terms, which were ſoon ſettled and agreed on for my board. If I remember well, he talked to her a good while in private; but I then apprehended nothing: I did not think my ſelf ſo nearly concerned, as perhaps I was. When he went away, he ſaid he would return and pay us a viſit in a few days, and recommended me very earneſtly to the miſtreſs of the houſe, who, after he was gone, ſhewed me a little chamber, where I put my cloaths, and where I was to lie with another young woman.

I MUST, for the ſake of the ſtory acquaint you with the name of this tradeſwoman; ſhe was called Mrs. du Tour; ſhe was a widow, and did not ſeem to be above thirty. She was pretty fat, and ſeem'd at firſt ſight, to be the beſt natured creature in the world. Her family conſiſted of a pretty little boy, who was her ſon, of about ſix or ſeven years old,

a maid, and one Mrs. Toinon her journey-woman.

HAD I fallen from ſome ſuperior region, I could not have been more chagrined than I was at my preſent ſituation. Perſons whoſe ſentiments are delicate, are ſooner caſt down than others; their hearts are more ſenſible, their ſouls more tender than the reſt of the world: and thoſe humane diſpoſitions, that make them more ſenſible of the ſuperior, the God-like pleaſure of doing good, here add an emphaſis to every miſery. A kind of ſtupid melancholy hangs upon their ſpirits; and with this melancholy was I ſeized, which ſpread a conſtant gloom over my countenance.

MRS. du Tour did all ſhe was able to diſperſe this cloud from my brow. Come, come, Mrs. Marianne, ſaid ſhe, (for ſhe had ask'd my name) don't be ſo *mollancholly*, you are with very good-natured people, I'll aſſure you; I love to ſee folks chearful and merry. Prithee, my girl, tell me what ails you? don't you like our company? for my part, I no ſooner ſaw you, than I took a fancy to you. Odsbobs, if you ſpoil that pretty face with crying ſo, you'll never get a huſband. There is our Toinon, continued ſhe, (pointing to her on the other ſide the table) ſhe is a very good girl: you muſt get acquainted with her: her company, I hope, will divert you.——O fay! Madam, rejoined the ſhop-maid, miſs and I ſhall be pure company: I'll divert her, I warrant you; for re'ly, I don't love to ſee folks look uneaſy.——This was the converſation at ſupper; to which I made no anſwer, but an inclination of my head, and a look, which ſufficiently expreſſed my acknowledgment: except ſometimes I had courage enough to tell them, they were very kind; tho' I thought my ſelf out of my true ſphere, and born for quite other company.

Their blunt vulgar freedom appeared very diſagreeable to me; and their language was a kind of jargon, whoſe harſhneſs offended the too great niceneſs of my ears. I was already perſuaded, that in the polite world there was ſomething ſuperior to this, and adapted, in ſome meaſure, to fill up the loſs of my generous benefactors, Mr. de Roſand and his dear ſiſter. I ſighed after the pleaſure of a converſation intirely unknown to me, and ſuitable to my own ideas; ſome fellow mind, capable of all that delicacy of ſentiment, which I perceived in my own thoughts; of eaſing my heart, by bearing a part in my grief; and by the charms of friendſhip and virtue capable of teaching me to conquer my inward gloom and ſettled diſcontent.

But how ſtrange are the whimſies that ſometimes poſſeſs our minds! tho' I knew not where to look for this relief, and could not fix upon any perſon whoſe ſoul I thought refined enough to reliſh my ſentiments and ſhare my heart: tho' I had ſcarce ſeen the ſtreets of Paris, yet I could not help obſerving the number of the coaches, and the ſplendid oſtentation of grandeur which appeared amongſt the great. I imagined that this new world ſeemed not altogether unknown to me, and that I ſhould here find what I ſo ardently longed for; and methought there was within me a natural inclination which wanted only theſe objects to exert itſelf upon: ſo that when I ſaw them, it was juſt as if I had met with ſomething I look'd for.

You'll eaſily judge, Madam, that with theſe diſpoſitions, how chimerical ſoever they appear, Mrs. du Tour and Toinon muſt be very diſagreable companions for me. To give you a deſcription of the latter, I muſt inform you ſhe was a girl that had a high opinion of her own merit, and no ſmall ſtock of affectation: as to her ſtature ſhe was very tall,

and

and held up her head with ſo remarkable an air, as ſhewed ſhe was afraid of looſing any part of her height, which ſhe looked upon as a great perfection; but when engaged in diſcourſe, ſhe confirmed what ſhe ſaid with ſuch an affected and ridiculous toſs, that you would almoſt have been in pain for her neck. She was extremely expert at her buſineſs, and handled her goods with all the judgment and addreſs imaginable, in which her whole ſoul was employed: for her wit was no longer than her ell.

For my part, I was ſo aukward in theſe things that I provoked her every moment. You would have ſmiled to ſee with what an air of conceitedneſs and pride ſhe reprimanded me, and blamed my want of dexterity. But the beſt of the jeſt was, that generally her corrections made me ſtill more aukward, becauſe they increaſed my diſguſt. We lay in the ſame room, as I have already told you; and there ſhe uſed to give me leſſons how to gain preferment as ſhe called it. Then followed the hiſtory of her family, their circumſtances, their characters, and what they gave her laſt year for her new-year's-gift. Then ſhe mentioned her lover, a genteel accompliſhed youth to be ſure, and that I might have an opportunity of ſeeing his merit, I ſhould take a walk with them both; to which, without envying her happineſs, I readily conſented. Nor were the foibles of Mrs. du Tour forgot, her lover would already have married her, if he had been rich enough to ſatify her vanity, which was the only obſtacle; he ſaw her every day, and was always a welcome gueſt.——'Tis only to divert you that I mention theſe trifling particulars, if they tire you, paſs them over.

Mr. de Climal (for that was the gentleman's name who brought me to Mrs. du. Tour's) had not

left

left me above three or four days, before he came to ſee me: I was then in our room with Mrs. Toinon, who was buſy ſhewing me her fine cloaths; and who, out of complaiſance, left the room as ſoon as he entered. Well, how does my angel, ſaid he? I flatter my ſelf you like your ſituation. I hope, Sir, anſwered I, I ſhall like it better when I am become more uſed to it. I ſhould be glad, returned he, to ſee you contented and happy; for I love you, my dear, with all my heart. The firſt moment I ſaw you I was tranſported with pleaſure, and ſhall give you all the proofs of my tenderneſs that lie in my power. Poor child, what delight ſhall I take in ſerving thee! but I muſt have your friendſhip in return——I ſhould be very ungrateful Sir, cried I, not to have a real friendſhip for you. No, no, returned he, it is not for want of gratitude that you don't love me; but becauſe you won't take the freedom with me I could wiſh—— I am too ſenſible ſaid I of the reſpect I owe you, to ——Nay, ſaid he, it is uncertain whether you owe me any, ſince we don't know who you are. But, Marianne, continued he, taking my hand, which he gently ſqueezed; can't you be a little more familiar with one who loves like me? You ſhould lay open all your ſoul to ſuch a friend; tell him your moſt ſecret thoughts; hide none of your inclinations, and be always glad to ſee and converſe with him—— Is this too much for me to expect? ſure it is not. I inſiſt upon it, that you ſhall make me your confidante, and that you throw off all reſerve; or elſe I am afraid we ſhall quarrel. But, hark ye, continued he, putting his hand in his pocket, I had like to have forgot to give you ſome money; here are a few Lewis d'ors. At firſt I refuſed them, telling him I did not want money; I had not yet ſpent what Mrs. de Roſand had left me; but nevertheleſs

leſs he forced me to accept them, in ſpite of all my reſolutions to the contrary: but I could not receive them without confuſion; and a mixture of ſhame and humility was, I dare ſay, viſible in my behaviour. But it was not for me, with all my ſtock of pride, to refuſe them, from a gentleman who had taken me, a poor orphan, under his care; and to whom I thought he reſolved to act as a father. As I received this preſent I thanked him, and made my acknowledgments with a grave dejected air. My dear charmer, ſaid he, no more curteſies, no more ceremonies I beſeech you; ſhew me rather that you are pleaſed. Come, let us ſee how complaiſant you will be for the new ſuit of cloaths I am going to give you; I did not, I believe, much mind the ſuit he promiſed; but he ſaid this with ſuch an air of goodneſs, that I confeſs he won my heart——All my reſolutions vaniſhed, and were ſucceeded by the moſt lively expreſſions of gratitude; while my eyes could ſcarce retain the tears of ſenſibility, that almoſt overflowed their banks. O my generous benefactor! cried I, have I indeed found a father? has the loſt Marianne ſome room to hope that ſhe may again lift up her eyes with comfort, and find the dear name of parent revived in you?

CHARM'D with this ſudden emotion, he took my hand, kiſſed it with the moſt tender and eager tranſport; with a rapture, which, notwithſtanding the confuſed ſtate of my own mind, I could not help taking notice of, and looking upon as very extraordinary; but ſingular as it was, it did not alarm me; and I only conſidered it as a ſudden, tho' odd, expreſſion of a good and honeſt heart.

HOWEVER from this moment I became more eaſy and free from conſtraint; and this freedom gave me charms, which he had not obſerved before. He frequently heſitated in his diſcourſe, and then looked

looked upon me with an exceſs of tenderneſs, which, though I took notice of, I only attributed to the delicacy of a virtuous and generous ſoul, pleaſed with the pleaſure it communicates, and happy in the reflection of doing its duty.———I could not then penetrate into his deſigns: my imagination had laid a plan for me, which flattered my good opinion of him; and thus prepoſſeſſed, I was the eaſier deceived: but how delightful the deception! methought a mountain was removed from my breaſt! I began to taſte again the peaceful joy, the inward tranquility, that I had formerly experienced. Tho' I ſaw him inchanted with delight, I imagined my ſituation, my youth, my wit, my beauty might inſpire him with a moſt innocent affection: It is natural, ſaid I, to myſelf, for perſons to have the moſt tender ſentiments for one of my age placed under their care: they are pleaſed with every degree of merit they obſerve in them, becauſe it reflects a greater luſtre upon their munificence by ſhewing it placed on a deſerving object. In ſhort, my youth and inexperience made me blind to his deſigns; and tho' I began to think him an original, I was not much more ſurprized at his behaviour, than I ſhould have been at the careſſes of a father. He took my hand, and with a gay air kiſſed it a thouſand times.—I admired the rapidity of his friendſhip, and could not help thinking with a ſecret delight, how very unaccountable it was, that his affections ſhould at once ariſe to ſo great a height: and this touched me more ſenſibly than all his favours. How readily does the honeſt mind think others ſo too! I formed my opinion of him, from my own innocence and artleſs ſimplicity. The virtuous are too apt to be governed by appearances, and to think others like themſelves: for the open undiſguiſed heart, can no more charge the ſeeming

honeſt

honeſt man with wearing a maſk, than it can wear one itſelf.

Perhaps, Madam, I ought not to have troubled you with theſe ſerious reflections, generally diſagreeable to ladies of your age. But conſider, that as you have given me orders to write, you ought in conſcience to bear with my impertinence. For my part, I don't care to think I am writing a book; that would diſcompoſe and embarraſs me too much. I perſuade myſelf I am talking to you, and that all I write paſſes in converſation. To proceed then.

It was the faſhion at this time to let the hair hang in curls upon the ſhoulders. Mine was of a bright cheſnut, and fell down with a becoming negligence. Mr. de Climal praiſed its colour, and with a gallant air took up ſome of my locks, and twiſted them round his finger. Nature, my dear Marianne, ſaid he, has been profuſe of her favours to you, and has denied you nothing that could inhance your charms. That lovely face would have been the moſt beautiful in the world without the addition of theſe graceful ringlets; which make your too engaging form compleat, and leave no room for addition. They will not reſtore me, my dear unknown parents, ſaid I; they will not let me know to whom I owe my being, nor revive my ever dear deceaſed friend. Very true, returned he, but they will make you admired and adored by every body; for my part, I ſhall never be able to refuſe you any thing. I make no doubt of it, ſaid I; I depend entirely on your generous and tender heart ——On my tender heart! cryed he laughing, Oh then, my little charmer, you can talk of the heart, I find; would you give me yours in return if I ſhould aſk it? Believe me, Sir, replied I, with an ingenuous freedom, for I had no notion what

returns

returns he meant, you well deſerve it: and I ſhall ſooner ceaſe to be, than to be grateful.

I HAD no ſooner made this reply, than I thought his look was eager and wild, and his eyes ſparkled with an uncommon fire, which, like a flaſh of lightning, at once alarmed me, and put me upon my guard; and I began to look upon him as a man not altogether ſo diſintereſted as I had before thought him; and inſtantly feared that all his generoſity and innocent friendſhip was degenerated into a criminal paſſion.

HOWEVER I did not take this ſudden ſuſpicion for a proof of the baſeneſs of his views.———I reſolved to be better ſatisfied, and to take notice of the minuteſt circumſtance that might give a light into his deſigns. My reſerve vaniſhed in proportion as my ſuſpicions increaſed, and that timidity, for which he had juſt before reproved me, was intirely diſſipated.—I believed, if it was true that he indulged an unlawful paſſion, there was no room left for ceremony on my part, and that it was he, not I, who ought to be embarraſſed; as was the guilt, ſo ſhould the ſhame and confuſion be his own. This reaſoning ran from the ſame ſource as the reſt, it appeared ſubtile and refined, and therefore I approved of it, and thought it juſt. I did not ſet myſelf upon making theſe nice diſtinctions, for our reflections naturally flow from the incidents that at firſt excite them; they arrive in our minds in a manner ſpontaneous, and almoſt without our perceiving them; and run on like a conſtant ſtream, whoſe courſe we are hardly able to ſtop. It is true, that thoſe, againſt whom we reaſon in this manner, have little to hope for from us; for it ſuppoſes, that with reſpect to their prevailing paſſions, we are thoroughly averſe to them. On this account Mr. de Climal was perfectly indifferent to me, and this indifference,

indifference, if he had uſed me ill, would readily have given place to hatred. I ſhould have looked upon him with leſs averſion, and, perhaps, might have returned his affection, had our acquaintance begun in another manner: but I had hitherto only conſidered him as a pious and religious man, who had taken the charge of me out of charity. And I don't know any light we can view a perſon in more unlikely to produce love. We have none of the tender ſentiments for one who is introduced to our thoughts in this manner. The humiliation, which the mind has ſuffered, ſhuts up all its avenues from the ſoft pleaſures of the tender paſſions. Whilſt you demand thoſe affections which are your due, and which may be juſtly claimed of us, nature and reaſon conſpire to juſtify ſuch pretenſions; for we are generally grateful, and it is hard, if not impoſſible, to extinguiſh all ſenſe of gratitude from the human breaſt: but change the ſubject, and demand a certain tenderneſs, which can only ſpring from an union of ſouls, a harmony of the ſofteſt ſentiments, and then ſelf-love revives; ſuch demands overturn the ſet of ideas we had before entertained of the perſon and make us at variance with him and ourſelves: for we can never give a heart freely, while it is expected from us as a debt. And thus it was with Mr. de Climal and I. 'Tis true, that if men knew how to oblige, I believe they might gain all that they could reaſonably expect; for can any thing be ſweeter than ſentiments of gratitude, when they are not oppoſed by ſelf-love? Here the mind is an inexhauſtable ſource of tenderneſs. But to gain this, a perſon muſt have two virtues, which ſeldom, almoſt never, meet in the ſame character; the one to hinder your being filled with diſguſt and indignation, at the manner of conferring the favours you receive; and the other to oblige you to be

grateful

grateful by a genuine benevolence, and unconſtrained liberality. ——

Mr. de Climal had ſpoke of a ſuit of cloaths which he intended to give me, and we went together to buy it, that I might pleaſe my fancy. I believe I ſhould have refuſed it, if I had been ſufficiently confirmed in my ſuſpicions: for I ſhould have had an invincible averſion againſt making any advantage of his weakneſs, becauſe I could not ſhare it with him: for when love is mutual, all theſe affairs are adjuſted; and we imagine the higheſt degree of delicacy conſiſts in not being at all delicate about them. But I was ſtill in doubt what were his inward ſentiments. And ſuppoſing it was only friendſhip, I concluded it muſt be a very extraordinary one, a friendſhip that deſerved to have all my pride ſacrificed to it. Thus I accepted of his preſent at all hazards.

The clothes were bought, I choſe them genteel and modeſt, and ſuitable to a young lady not very rich. After this was done, Mr. de Climal talked of linnen (and, really, I wanted ſome) and it was immediately purchaſed. Mrs. du Tour might have furniſhed us with the ſame ſort; but he had his reaſons for not buying it of her. He inſiſted upon having it ſome of the fineſt, and ſhe would certainly have thought this an extravagant kind of charity: and tho' it might be expected ſhe would not concern herſelf about it, becauſe ſhe would have judged it no buſineſs of her's; it was better ſhe ſhould loſe her profit, than we truſt her with what ſhe might be cenſorious enough to put no favourable conſtruction upon.

However his behaviour relating to the linnen, left me no room to doubt what were his motives. I wondered that the clothes, which were very handſome, had not at firſt taught me his ſentiments.

For

For charity is not extravagant in her gifts. Friendſhip itſelf, whoſe higheſt pleaſure is to communicate ſatisfaction and delight, is ſubſtantially good, but not magnificently ſo. Our virtues ſeldom ariſe to their proper height, for we are more apt to be ſparing than profuſe, and it is, in general, only vice that exceeds all bounds.

I WHISPERED to him, and told him with a ſerious air, that I could not accept of linnen ſo extremely fine and expenſive: he only laughed, and ſaid, Hold your tongue, you little ſilly rogue; you are young, and don't know what you'd have: go to your glaſs and ſee if it is too fine for that beautiful face; and then, without minding what I ſaid, agreed to the price, and paid for it.

HERE I found my ſelf much embarraſſed, for I ſaw he loved me; loved did I ſay? no, let me rather ſay he indulged inclinations infinitely beneath that noble paſſion, which always exerts itſelf in ardent deſires after the happineſs of the beloved object. I ſaw his motives were baſe and ungenerous; and that this extravagance was only intended to bribe my affections, and to betray me into ruin and miſery. I thought too, that in accepting of his preſents, I gave him juſt reaſon to think I favoured his paſſion. I conſidered what I ought to do, but I believe, now I think coolly, I did it only to looſe time: I aſſembled a thouſand reflections, in order to excuſe to myſelf, the indeterminate ſtate of a mind, loth to part with what flattered its vanity. By this means, I was unable to fix upon any thing, and thereby both deferred the rupture with Mr. de Climal, and kept his preſent.

BUT aſhamed of his views, and ſhocked at his deteſted hypocriſy, my dear friend, my generous and kind benefactor, Mr. de Roſand came into my mind. What a frightful difference is there, ſaid I to my

ſelf,

ſelf, between the aſſiſtance he gave me, and that I now receive! How exceſſive would be his concern, did he know the dangers to which I am now expoſed! and how great the grief of his ſiſter, had ſhe lived to ſee me in this dreadful ſituation! Methought my behaviour in this laſt adventure violated, in the moſt cruel manner, the reſpect I owed to her tender friendſhip and unblemiſhed purity; and that it was a kind of ſacrilegious inſult on her memory. Nay, methought ſhe took even now a ſhare in my calamities, and tho' bleſſed with unfading happineſs, bluſhed at my weakneſs, and was anxious leſt I ſhould deſert the paths of virtue, and forfeit my glorious hopes of immortal felicity. On this occaſion I felt a thouſand ſenſations, which tho' ſufficiently felt are impoſſible to be deſcribed. On the other hand, I reaſoned with myſelf that I had no retreat, and Mr. de Climal had given me one; I wanted clothes, and he bought them for me; they were genteel, and in imagination I had already tried them on, and found they fitted me exactly. But I did not take care to ſtop at this particular, which was intermixed with many other conſiderations; for the pleaſure it gave me glowed in my cheeks, and I was glad to indulge the delightful idea, and to flatter my ſelf I might do it without a crime. What admirable artifices do we make uſe of, to ſeem innocent of follies we long to commit! Then, ſaid I to my ſelf, Mr. de Climal has not yet ſpoke of his hateful paſſion, and perhaps he may not venture to do it this long time; and it is not for me to ſearch into the motive of actions ſo beneficial to me.——I was introduced to him as a charitable and pious gentleman, and he has been charitable to exceſs. If his views are bad, it is the worſe for him; I am not obliged to examine his conſcience, and I can never be an accomplice in any of his crimes

crimes till he has explained himſelf. This little caſe of conſcience thus decided, my ſcruples vaniſhed, and the linnen and clothes appeared lawfully mine. We returned back to Mrs. du Tour's, and in our way Mr. de Climal by little and little diſcovered his paſſion; he unmaſked inſenſibly, and the fawning amorous lover took place of the grave and pious devotee. I could ſee but half his face, but I concluded that I ought to ſee him entirely in order to know him, and therefore reſolved to be very inſenſible, and not ſeem to underſtand him till then. My clothes were not yet in a place of ſecurity, and if I had ſhewn my reſentment too ſoon, I ſhould, perhaps, have loſt all. Perſons governed by ſuch paſſions, as that of Mr. de Climal's for me, are of a baſe and ungenerous ſpirit, and when they have loſt their hopes, are unable to make an honourable retreat.—He indeed is an unworthy and deſpicable lover, whoſe deſires of ſelf-gratification exceed his tenderneſs, and make him wiſh rather to enjoy the perſon, than the affection of his miſtreſs——Not but lovers of the moſt delicate and refined ſentiments have deſires in ſome meaſure; but their ſouls, united by the tendereſt ties of affection, go hand in hand with the gratification of their ſenſes.

I RESOLVED then not to underſtand Mr. de Climal's fawning expreſſions. I am afraid I ſhall love you too much, Marianne, ſaid he; and if I ſhould, what would you do? I would be ſtill more grateful, ſaid I, if it were poſſible for my gratitude to admit of an increaſe. Nevertheleſs, my dear Marianne, ſaid he, I am uncertain what you will think when you know all my tenderneſs, for you can't eaſily conceive how great it is. How, Sir, returned I, can you believe that it is poſſible I ſhould be inſenſible of your friendſhip? Ah! my little wag, replied he, don't change my expreſſions,

I did not ſpeak of my friendſhip, but my tenderneſs. What, ſaid I, is it not the ſame thing? pray, where is the difference? No, my life, ſaid he, looking upon me with eyes that expreſſed the difference ſufficiently; no, my dear girl, it is not the ſame thing; for I ſhould be overjoyed to ſee the one appear more ſweet and deſirable to you than the other. Upon this, I could not help caſting down my eyes; and tho' I endeavoured to hide my confuſion, I was not able to do it; my embarraſſment was viſible, and it was impoſſible for me immediately to compoſe my ſelf in order to make him a reply. What, my little jewel, cryed he, taking me by the hand, not a word? don't you underſtand me? I am aſhamed, Sir, ſaid I, that I can't find terms to thank you for ſuch goodneſs.

HAPPILY for me the converſation ended here by our arrival at home; which cut off all farther diſcourſe for the preſent; however as we parted, he whiſpered in my ear, Go, you dear rogue; for the future be more apprehenſive, and learn to melt that heart into greater ſoftneſs——I leave you mine to aſſiſt you in it.

THIS diſcourſe was plain and intelligible enough, and I was obliged to ſeem inattentive in order to countenance my ſimplicity, that my anſwers might the better be diſpenſed with: but a kiſs that he gave my ear in ſpeaking to me, fixed all my attention; for it was impoſſible I ſhould be deaf to that, tho' I had art enough to diſſemble it: Sir, did not I hurt you, cried I, with a natural air, pretending to take the kiſs he had given me, for a jog of my head againſt his? as I ſpoke this, I ſtept out of the coach, and I really believe he was the dupe of my artifice, for he anſwered moſt naturally—No.

I CARRIED the bundle of cloaths into my chamber, and locked it up, while Mr. de Climal waited

in the ſhop with Mrs. du Tour. I was down again immediately——Marianne, ſaid he, in a grave and reſerved tone, for it was now his time to appear religious again, let your clothes be made immediately, for I will come to pay you another viſit in three or four days, when I expect to ſee you dreſſed. Then turning to Mrs. du Tour, I have endeavoured, ſaid he, to chuſe her cloaths ſuitable to the fine linnen ſhe has ſhewn me, which was left her by a deceaſed friend.

I MUST obſerve, Mr. de Climal had told me before-hand, he intended to give it this turn to Mrs. du Tour; you will eaſily gueſs the reaſon, tho' he did not explain it: beſides, continued he, I think it proper that Miſs ſhould be genteely dreſſed, becauſe I have ſomething in view for her, which may poſſibly ſucceed, that will be much to her advantage. He ſpoke this with an air of beneficence, and the look of an honeſt man. He was indeed a contraſt to himſelf: Mr. de Climal with me was quite a different perſon from Mr. de Climal in company with others: when I ſaw his devout countenance, I could not comprehend how it was poſſible that he could ever appear in the character of a debauchee. He had good ſenſe, and did not want wit; but then he had hypocriſy, a baſe and unmanly vice, to counterballance it, and, in particular, had a deſign to ruin me, while he pretended to be doing a work of charity. Good God! how many talents haſt thou given men to make them goodfor nothing?———

HE retired after a ſhort converſation with Mrs. du Tour in private, and was no ſooner gone, but ſhe, to whom he had related my hiſtory, applauded his piety and generoſity. Marianne, ſaid ſhe, it was a lucky moment when firſt you ſaw this wor-

thy gentleman; you ſee he takes as much care of you as if you were his own child; for certain this man has not his equal in the world for goodneſs; how very charitable he is! The word *charity* ſounded harſh and diſagreeable to me; for my ſelf-love was too tender not to be ſenſibly wounded at it: but Mrs. du Tour knew no better; her language was agreeable to her underſtanding, vulgar and unpoliſhed, and whatever ſhe ſaid, as it was always without thought, ſhe pleaſed or diſpleaſed without deſign. However, this expreſſion made me look uneaſy, but I took no notice of it, as we had no other witneſs than the grave Mrs. Toinon, who was much more diſpoſed to envy my new finery, than to think me humbled in receiving it. Oh, as for that, Miſs Marianne (ſaid ſhe in her turn with a jealous air) was wrapt in her Mother's ſmock, ſhe has ſuch fortune: On the contrary, ſaid I, I was born to be the moſt unhappy, or elſe I ſhould have been infinitely better provided for than I am now. So, is it true then, ſaid ſhe, with an affected toſs of the head, that you have neither father nor mother? and that you are owned by no body living? that is pleaſant! Yes, returned I ſeverely nettled, it is mighty pleaſant! a joyful circumſtance indeed! and I wonder you, Mrs. Toinon, have not congratulated me upon it. Hold your tongue you fool, ſaid Mrs. du Tour, who ſaw I was vexed, ſhe has reaſon to ſneer at you; thank God for having preſerved your parents——Who ever tells people they are *foundlings?* I had as leave be called a *baſtard.*

Was not this a comfortable way of taking my part? this woman's zeal ſhocked me more than the impertinent inſult of the other, and the tears guſhed into my eyes, which I in vain laboured to conceal. Mrs. du Tour, touched to ſee me ſo affected, imput-

ed

ed it to the impertinence of Mrs. Toinon, without imagining that ſhe herſelf had been in the leaſt inſtrumental to my uneaſineſs. Her concern made me tremble, for fear Toinon ſhould be again reprimanded; the tears trickled down my cheeks, and I made haſte to divert this converſation by intreating them to change the diſcourſe.——Mrs. Toinon, for her part, at ſeeing my tears, ſeem'd quite confounded; for ſhe was not ill-natured, and, I believe, had no intention to make me uneaſy. She was, indeed, vain, and had a ſufficient ſtock of pride, which ſhe thought became her; and it was really a very mortifying circumſtance for the poor girl, to think I had a ſuit of new cloaths, and ſhe had none. Perhaps ſhe thought ſhe ought to make herſelf amends, by being witty at my expence: however, to accommodate the matter they made me a compliment, and told me they ſincerely begged my pardon. And as I ſaw that theſe good people had no notion at all of my pride, nor the delicacy of ſoul which made me ſo ſuſceptible of pain; and that they did not ſuſpect the leaſt part of the confuſion they gave me, I accepted their careſſes, and the converſation turned upon my clothes, which they were impatient to ſee, and their curioſity made me deſirous to hear what they would ſay of them.

I RAN to fetch them without heſitation; for my diſguſt had ſubſided, and given way to the pleaſure I imagined I ſhould immediately feel upon a review of my new finery. I took the parcel I had before carried into my chamber, and brought it down to them. How giddy and thoughtleſs are young people! and how haſty was I fooliſhly to indulge my vanity, for which I was ſeverely humbled! The firſt thing they ſaw in opening it was the fine linnen, the buying of which we had been at ſo much pains to conceal, and which had coſt Mr. de Climal a

lye, and me the conſenting to it. I had intirely forgot that this linnen was in the bundle with my clothes; Mrs. du Tour inſtantly caſt her eyes upon it and cry'd out, Ha ha, ſee here is ſomething elſe! Mr. de Climal told us your deceaſed relation left you this; but I find, he bought it for you himſelf! I muſt tell you, Marianne, it was very ill done of you not to have it of me; you are not more nice I hope than thoſe ladies of quality, that have honoured me with their cuſtom. Your Mr. de Climal has a mind to be pleaſant: I find the old ſaint has got a colt's tooth in his head: I ſee how it is, (added ſhe, drawing the ſilk from under the linnen; for her anger did not put a ſtop to her curioſity, which in our ſex is a governing inclination that keeps pace with every thing that paſſes in our minds) I ſee well enough how it is, ſaid ſhe, I know the reaſon why he deceived me about the linnen, but I am not ſuch an arrant fool as he takes me to be; I know better; out upon it, who would have thought it——away, away with her things, cryed ſhe, raiſing her voice, and toſſing them from her with a diſdainful air, marry-come-up, this is mighty pretty indeed. He has the goodneſs to put his Miſs to board with me; but what he buys for her he has elſewhere; I'll aſſure him! I muſt have the trouble, forſooth, and other people the profit! All this while Toinon fingered the ſilk as if ſhe was afraid ſhe ſhould ſoil it. When having an opportunity to ſpeak by Mrs. du Tour's leaving off; Good-lack-a-day, cried ſhe, who would not be an orphan! This the poor girl ſaid only to bear a part in the ſcene; for as demure as ſhe looked, if he had given it her, ſhe would have been ſtupid with pleaſure. Come be quiet, Toinon, interrupted Mrs. du Tour, I ſee well enough you only envy the girl.

HITHERTO I had been ſilent; I felt ſo many different ſenſations, ſo much confuſion and vexation, that I knew not what to ſay. It was a ſituation entirely new to me; and I could not forbear ſhewing my reſentment. At laſt, I began to recollect myſelf; and my anger, bearing every other conſideration before it, was expreſſed in the moſt lively manner; but it was an anger frank and natural; and which, as it ſprung from my own innocence, could not have been felt by a guilty mind. It was true that Mr. de Climal had pretended to love me; but I was conſcious I had not liſtened to his paſſion, and was reſolved to make no advantage of it; for tho' I had received his preſent, when I knew at the ſame time I ſhould never comply with his views, it was only owing to the little reaſons dictated by my wants and my vanity, and which had not, however, ſtained the purity of my intentions: my reaſoning doubtleſs was erroneous, though not criminal; and therefore I did not not merit the inſults thrown upon me by Mrs. du Tour. I made a terrible uproar; I threw the cloaths and linnen upon the ground, without knowing why I did it; it was only an expreſſion of the violence of my paſſion. At laſt I ſpoke, or rather cried; but I remember nothing of what I ſaid, only that I confeſſed Mr. de Climal had bought the linnen, and that he obliged me to keep it a ſecret, without telling me the reaſons he had for doing ſo; that I was very unhappy in being placed among perſons who accuſed and inſulted me without any ground for doing it; that I would inſtantly leave them, and would only firſt call a coach to take away my clothes: that for my part, I did not care what became of me; and that it was better I ſhould die in want and indigence, than live in a ſituation ſo contrary to my inclinations: that I would leave Mr. de Climal's preſent

with her; ſince I deſpiſed his love, and abhorred his brutal paſſion. In ſhort, I was like a little lioneſs; my head was turned; every thing that could aggravate my affliction preſented itſelf before me: the death of my dear friend, and the abſence of her brother; my being deprived of their tenderneſs and friendly advice to ſupport me under every exigence; the fatal loſs of my parents; the mortification I had already undergone; and the dreadful thought of being without a friend, without one dear companion to liſten to my tender complaints, and teach me to regulate my paſſions. Unknown to the world; without the leaſt hint of my extraction; and nothing before me but the proſpect of a miſery which knew no bounds; for I had only my beauty to procure me friends; and what a dreadful reſource is the vices of mankind! Dreadful indeed! but I firmly reſolved to loſe my life rather than my virtue. Which way ſoever I turned my thoughts, how diſmal was the view that lay before me!—Was not all this enough to turn the brain of one ſo young as I?

Mrs. du Tour was frighted to ſee me in ſuch a violent tranſport, as it was quite unexpected; for ſhe only thought to ſee me out of countenance, and confuſed with my guilt. Lord, Marianne, ſaid ſhe, when ſhe could find room to put in a word, any one may be deceived: Prithee, child, moderate your paſſion; I am ſorry I have ſaid ſo much, (for my behaviour had convinced her of my innocence, ſince my rage was too great to proceed from a guilty conſcience) come, come, endeavour to compoſe yourſelf. But I would not hearken to what ſhe ſaid, and at all hazards was reſolved to leave her family.

At laſt ſhe puſhed me into a little room where ſhe ſhut herſelf in with me. There, after having exhauſted my ſpirits with my complaints, I gave

way

way to my grief; my tears, which before were reſtrained by my anger, now began to flow plentifully, and to give eaſe to my burſting heart; which the good woman ſeeing, bore me company, and cried too moſt heartily.

At this inſtant Toinon came to tell us dinner was ready, and as ſhe was always of every body's opinion, ſhe cried for company: but after this flood of tears, being moved at their careſſes, I began to be appeaſed; my paſſion ſoon abated, and all was forgot.

Perhaps the ſum Mr. de Climal paid for my board contributed a little to ſoften Mrs. du Tour's reſentment, and to make her repent her having uſed me ill; the vexation of not having ſold us the linnen, was, without doubt, her greateſt uneaſineſs: for while we were at dinner, ſhe changed her tone, and told me, that if Mr. de Climal loved me, as to all appearance he did, I ought to make my advantage of it. (I ſhall never forget her words as long as I live.) Hark you, Marianne, ſaid ſhe, was I in your place, I know how I would manage him; for ſince you have nothing, and are a poor girl, who have loſt even the comfort of having any relations, I would take at firſt whatever Mr. de Climal would give me; Ods-bobs, I would get all I could; but he ſhould never gain my affections; I would not love him at all the better for that; I would be hanged firſt; for our honour ought to be preferred before every thing; I am not the woman you ſee that will ſay any thing to the contrary of that. In a word, my girl; for one word is as good as a thouſand; for certain, there is nothing like being virtuous, and I ſhall die in that opinion. But this don't *argify* that you muſt throw away all the bleſſings you meet with; theſe things may be eaſily reconciled: for inſtance, there is Mr. de

Climal and you; well, muſt you bid him begone? — No ſurely. He loves you.—Is that your fault? let him love you; for every body muſt anſwer for himſelf. He buys you clothes,—take them, girl, are not they paid for? If he gives you money, don't be ſilly, but accept of it freely; it is not for you to be proud and above it. If he aſks you for your love,———ſoftly there; play cunning with him, and tell him it is not impoſſible but you may in time:———To give your word and retract it may go a great way.———Firſt, you muſt have time to bring yourſelf to love him; and then you muſt perſwade him you begin to love him; then you ſhould have time to augment your paſſion. And then when he thinks you entirely his, is not your honour a ſufficient excuſe? Is there not a thouſand good reaſons to plead. Can't you preach to him of the wickedneſs of his intentions? mean while the time paſſes, and preſents come without aſking. And if he at laſt grows out of humour, can't you be as ill-natured as he? let him go and be hanged; marry, what is given is given, and there is nothing like a preſent; for when it is given, it can't be demanded back; but if a man don't make preſents, he keeps his riches in his own poſſeſſion, and then there is no coming at them. Really, if one of theſe devout hypocrites thought fit to pay his reſpects to me, he ſhould give to the end of the world, before I would bid him leave off.

The zeal and ſpirit with which Mrs. du Tour uttered theſe fine maxims, were even better than the maxims themſelves; they were indeed indulgent enough; but ſuch as would have ill ſuited with the character of a woman of honour: for theſe doctrines are more than a little dangerous, and, I believe, lead to the very brink of libertiniſm; for however flattering they may appear to our vanity, they

they muſt be ſhocking to every mind that has the leaſt ſenſe of honour, the leaſt remains of virtue eſtabliſhed in the heart: and I can't think it very eaſy to remain honeſt in ſo dangerous a road. Young as I was, I could not hear her arguments without an inward abhorrence; and, indeed, was a girl, in my circumſtances, ſure of preſerving that ineſtimable jewel her chaſtity, yet the practice of theſe looſe principles would for ever be a diſgrace, and ſtamp an indelible mark of infamy upon her character. For muſt not ſhe want honour, who can perſuade a man that ſhe ſhall one day forfeit it? nay, the art of deceiving a man with theſe avaricious views, is, in my opinion, more criminal, than even, in ſome unguarded moment, to fall a ſacrifice to guilt and ſhame; for the moſt infamous inducement, the baſeſt and moſt ungenerous motive to be vicious, is that which is prompted by avarice, and terminates in falſhood and deceit. For my part, my heart was too ſincere to behave in a manner, that appeared to me ſo infamouſly deteſtable. I would neither do ill, nor ſeem to promiſe that I ever would: I hated injuſtice and falſhood of every kind; but that which proceeded from degenerate motives like theſe, could not fail to fill me with horror and deteſtation.—Her diſcourſe made me bluſh for her, while ſhe gave me advice for her advantage and my own. For Mrs. du Tour's part, ſhe would have been extremely glad to have the profit of my board continue a great while longer, and pleaſed herſelf with the thoughts of helping me to ſpend Mr. de Climal's money in feaſts and entertainments; for thus, with a laugh, did ſhe explain herſelf; for ſhe loved good eating, and was a perfect glutton when at another's expence; but was very ſtingy when at her own.

AFTER dinner my cloaths and linnen were given to the workwomen, whom Mrs. du Tour deſired to be as expeditious as poſſible. She hoped, without doubt, that in ſeeing myſelf well rigged and ſpruce (for theſe were her terms) I ſhould be tempted to draw out my adventure with Mr. de Climal to a good length. It is true, I had all the vanity and folly that can poſſeſs a young giddy mind: a ribbon well choſen, or a genteel ſuit of cloaths, whenever I met them, were ſufficient to make me ſtop ſhort; my fancy glowed, and the agitation of my heart would continue an hour after; nor did I fail to imagine my ſelf equipped in all thoſe trifles. But in ſpite of this diſpoſition, ſince I was certain Mr. de Climal loved me, I abſolutely reſolved the firſt time he explained himſelf, to let him know the vanity of his expectations.

FOUR days after my clothes and linnen were brought home; it was on a holiday, and juſt as I was getting up. At the ſight of them, both Toinon and I were ſilent, but from very different motives; a ſudden joy fluttered about my heart, while ſhe caſt down her eyes with a ſullen diſcontent; ſhe reflected no doubt upon the difference there would ſoon be between us, and would gladly have changed her parents, and have been the orphan, for the vain pleaſure of enjoying my imaginary happineſs. She looked upon me, with a ſtupid and jealous eye; but with ſuch a mixture of humility, that, notwithſtanding my own ſatisfaction, I could not help pitying her. But her grief could not be helped; however, to give her as little pain as poſſible, I put on my cloaths in the moſt modeſt and grave manner, before a little ſilly looking-glaſs, which could ſcarce ſhew me half my perſon, but that half appeared ſmart and ſufficiently charming.

I THEN began to dreſs my head, that I might enjoy at once all my ornaments. I could not look upon my growing beauty, which ſeemed to encreaſe, in proportion as I advanced in dreſſing, without feeling a kind of pleaſing palpitation at my heart, whilſt my hand trembled at every pin I ſtuck. I made as much ſpeed as I could to finiſh my agreeable employment, yet without being over haſty, for I was willing to have nothing imperfect; but I had ſoon done; for all the perfection of dreſs that I was then acquainted with lay in very narrow bounds. It is true, I began with admirably good diſpoſitions, but that was all. Indeed, when I knew the world, I was a better judge of thoſe little elegancies, which our ſex look upon as neceſſary to compleat the charms of nature, and ſhew that the poſſeſſor has a good taſte. Men talk of philoſophy, and the ſtudy of the ſciences——but what is all this knowledge to that of placing a ribbon with judgment, or of deciding what colour beſt ſuits the preſent complection, and is moſt adapted to pleaſe. If we knew what paſſes in a coquet's head, on ſuch occaſions; if we did but obſerve how delicate and penetrating her ſoul is; how ſharp in the judgment ſhe makes, on the faſhions ſhe tries; then rejects, heſitates, and at laſt, when weary with uncertainty and irreſolution, chuſes; for ſhe is ſeldom content, and the effect always comes vaſtly ſhort of her idea. If one could but know the mighty importance of all theſe ſeeming trifles, I ſay, it would be enough to confound the moſt able capacities; and Ariſtotle himſelf would appear but a ſchool-boy, compared with a coquet. When ſhe has found what pleaſes, it is but a very indifferent diſcovery, for ſhe muſt find out what is better, in order to carry it on to its laſt perfection and finiſhing excellence: and to attain this, ſhe muſt read the ſouls of men, that ſhe may prefer-

prefer what will pleaſe them moſt. Charmed with the power of pleaſing, the coquet employs her art to form herſelf, to ſuit the taſte of her admirers: one day ſhe appears gay and eaſy, and with an air that inſures ſucceſs; the next, with a countenance ſoft and languiſhing, adorned with all the tender graces; and then with a beauty, modeſt, ſerious, and reſerved. Thus with varied charms, ſhe ſtrives to retain the fickle ſex. She knows how to be many women in one; and by turns aſſuming each perfection, ſuits herſelf to the inconſtancy of her admirers, by preſenting them every day with a new miſtreſs. How vain are ſuch ſnares, and how unlikely to hold a man of ſenſe and honour! 'Tis virtue, 'tis virtue alone, that is the univerſal charm, to which all hearts ſecretly pay an humble adoration: and when united with that ſweet complacency and open freedom of ſoul, which triumphs in the countenance, and ſparkles in the eyes of a lady of ſenſe and good-nature, it needs not thoſe empty blandiſhments which the vain part of our ſex are ſo fond of.

But I am always wandering from my ſubject; pray forgive my digreſſions, they divert me, and give a kind of relaxation to my thoughts. Beſides, you know I am now converſing with you.

To proceed. I told you before, I was ſoon dreſſed, and really I ſo perfectly eclipſed poor Miſs Toinon, that I was aſhamed of it; Mrs. du Tour told me, I looked charmingly; but Toinon could not forbear finding fault with my cloaths; whilſt I, out of charity to her, approved of whatever ſhe ſaid; for if I had ſhewn my ſecret ſatisfaction, ſhe would have been more humbled ſtill; and, I thought, I ought to conceal a pleaſure, that, if diſcovered, would give her pain. I have always retained this delicacy and regard for the hearts of others.

I WAS in haſte to go to church, but, I believe, rather out of vanity than devotion. My companion Miſs Toinon, who on holidays was waited upon by her lover, went out before me; poſſibly for fear the gaiety of my dreſs ſhould attract the attention of her admirer; for with ſome people a new ſuit has as many charms as a pretty face. I went out alone, confuſed, and at a loſs how to behave, fooliſhly imagining, that my appearance required a particular air of diſtinction with which I was entirely unacquainted. I held up my head with the aukward ſtiffneſs of a roſy country girl, who endeavours to diſplay all the ſmiling graces which had lain concealed in a ruſtic retreat.

I COME now, Madam, to an event, which has been the original of all the paſt ſcenes of a life intermingled with extreme diſtreſs, and exquiſite happineſs. With this I ſhall begin my ſecond part, believing it neceſſary to give you, as well as myſelf, ſome reſpite.

The End of the FIRST PART.

THE

THE VIRTUOUS ORPHAN.

PART II.

TELL me, my dear friend, if your ſeeming impatience to ſee the ſequel of my hiſtory, is not partly complaiſance. I almoſt ſuſpect it; for hitherto what I have related is only a thread of adventures, uncommon indeed, but not very intereſting; and which, if I was diſpoſed to print, would, I am perſwaded, appear low and trifling to many of my readers; for I am yet only a petty linnen-draper, and that would diſguſt them. There are people, whoſe vanity mixes with every thing they do, and even with their reading. Give them the hiſtory of the human heart, and provided the characters are of diſtinguiſhed rank, it will appear to them quite important and worthy their conſideration; but you muſt not preſume to mention perſons of a lower claſs. They don't love to ſee any actors on the ſtage, but lords, princes, or kings, or at leaſt of thoſe who have made a figure in life. Nothing elſe will ſuit their noble taſte, for the reſt of the ſpecies are beneath their notice. They will inſinuate, that nature might very well have ſpared the production of theſe creatures, and that the mechanic is a diſhonour to her. Judge then, Madam, with what diſdain theſe readers would look upon me. But this picture don't at all affect you. Your notions

tions of human nature are more noble, more conformable to truth, and therefore more ſuitable to an individual of that vaſt body, which compoſes the human ſpecies; and undazzled with the glare of external grandeur, I am perſwaded you obſerve the harmony ariſing from the different claſſes of the ſame collective body, and even ſee that the higheſt and moſt ſhining characters are ſometimes rival'd and outdone in real uſefulneſs, and intrinſic native excellence, by the loweſt and moſt miſerable. I was afraid the firſt part of my life contained ſo few events, and ſuch long reflections, that you would already think me tedious. However you are pleaſed to ſay the contrary, and to preſs me to go on. I ſhall therefore proceed.——

I HAVE already told you that I went to church. At the entrance I found a croud of people; but that did not detain me: for I paſſed through it without much difficulty to the upper part of the choir, attracted by the ſplendid appearance of a great number of perſons of faſhion, who were ſitting with an air of eaſe and indolence. The ladies were extremely well dreſſed. Some, whoſe complexions were very ordinary, attempted to put on ſuch an agreeable air, as might make the hardneſs of their features imperceptible. Whilſt others, too full of themſelves to ſuſpect they wanted thoſe charms which captivate all hearts, diſplayed their folly by a thouſand airs of coquetry, in which their whole ſouls ſeemed employed.

ONE I obſerved, charming indeed, who ſeemed not to think it worth her while to affect thoſe trifling arts, in which the others were engaged, for ſhe was above acting the coquet, and ſeeking applauſe from what ought rather to raiſe contempt. She ſat with an air of ſatisfaction in her looks, quite negligent of her ſuperior power to draw the attention

tion and the hearts of the beholders. I was not leſs pleaſed with the countenance of a lady who ſat near her: ſhe was ordinary to the laſt degree, but had ſuch an engaging openneſs, ſuch an air of benevolence and genuine good-nature, that it was impoſſible to ſee her without partaking of her diſpoſition, and being prepoſſeſſed with ſomething like friendſhip and eſteem.

THERE were alſo ſeveral gay young gentlemen of the ſword and gown, whoſe behaviour ſhewed they were full of themſelves; and who leaning on the backs of their chairs, put themſelves into thoſe gallant and ridiculous poſtures, which ſhewed them well verſed in all the arts of the foppiſh part of the polite world. One while they lolled upon their elbows; then ſtood upright to ſhow their ſnuff-boxes, bowed to the right and left, ſighed, and put themſelves into a thouſand different attitudes, in order to ſhew their good mien, and diſplay their charming ſelves to the beſt advantage.

THE place I had taken was juſt in the centre of this gay part of the audience. And I was ſcarce ſeated, before I obſerved the eyes of all the gentlemen fixed upon me, for I ſeemed to engage their whole attention; but this was not all, the ladies ſoon found themſelves deſerted, and following the eyes of the gentlemen, fixed upon me for their rival, who had taken from them the regards of their admirers. I was convinced that theſe were their thoughts by a glance they caſt at me, which I perfectly underſtood; though they tried to do it with an air of ſimplicity and negligence, which evidently ſhowed it was deſigned; for, in ſpite of themſelves, it had a touch of diſdain and uneaſineſs. Here my pride took the alarm, and I felt an inward triumph, at the viſible confuſion which the ladies diſcovered. O vanity, thou darling foible of our ſex! When we

we indulge this ſtrong propenſity to captivate every beholder, what follies are we not liable to! I had forgot my devotions, which doubtleſs would have engaged my ſoul, had I been dreſſed more ſuitably to my circumſtances; and was acting a part very unbecoming the poor, the wretched Marianne, who had nothing to expect but either to exchange the gay trifles I wore for want and miſery, or to preſerve them by forfeiting my peace and innocence.

My rivals did not long keep their eyes fixed upon me, their examination was ſhort, for we have ſoon done with what humbles us.

Among the gentlemen whoſe attention I had engaged, I obſerved one, who drew from me a more than common regard, and to whom my eyes ſeemed voluntarily to move; his air was graceful and engaging, and ſomething in his mien ſo charming, that it was impoſſible to look upon him with indifference,———I took a pleaſure in beholding him———and though a coquet to others, was very ſincere with reſpect to him. Mean time I gave up the care of pleaſing, to indulge the delight I felt in ſeeing him. Love, perhaps, uſually inſinuates itſelf into the heart with this artleſs ſincerity; becauſe it is not unlikely, but the pleaſure of loving may interfere with the care of appearing lovely.

The young gentleman, in his turn, gazed upon me in a manner very different from the reſt: a modeſt and tender reſpect appeared in his looks, while by our mutual glances, a kind of ſerious ſilent intercourſe paſſed between us: the others openly applauded my charms, while he ſeemed to feel them, at leaſt I flattered my ſelf it was ſo; but all my mind was confuſed: I can't ſay what I thought of him, or my ſelf; all that I know of it is, that his looks embarraſſed me, and that I was afraid to return them; yet could not help doing it every moment;

and

and tho' I was loth he ſhould meet my glances, yet I was not ſorry that he had done it.

The ſervice being ended, I went out of the church, regretting the place I had juſt left; I felt a vacancy in my breaſt, my heart ſeemed to want ſomething, but not to know what it was; I ſay, it did not know what it was, but that perhaps is ſaying too much; for I was inceſſantly turning my head, to ſee once more the amiable gentleman I had left behind; yet could hardly believe it was he that induced me to it. He was talking to ſome perſons who ſtopt him, and my eyes continually met his; at laſt, the croud hid him from my ſight, and dragged me with them: I found my ſelf in the ſtreet, and with a dejected mind took the way home.

My thoughts were no longer full of my ſelf, and I did not even think of being agreeable. Indifferent to all but him, I neglected my charms, and took no care to diſplay them to advantage. Mean while, I was ſo loſt in thought, that I did not hear the noiſe of a coach behind me, till alarmed by the coachman's crying aloud, Have a care, take care there. His laſt cry made me ſtart from my revery; but the danger in which I ſaw myſelf, frighted me ſo much, that in endeavouring to eſcape it by running, I fell down: but one ſtep farther, and the horſes had run over me; the people about me were alarmed, and cried out, and the maſter of the coach louder than the reſt, who inſtantly bounced out, and flew to help me. I was ſtill on the ground, from whence, notwithſtanding all my efforts, I was unable to ariſe; the good people lifted me up, but ſaw it was impoſſible for me to ſtand. Judge of my aſtoniſhment, when among thoſe who expreſſed the greateſt eagerneſs to aſſiſt me, I ſaw the young gentleman whom I had left in the church:

the

the coach I found was his, he lived but juſt by, and would by all means have me carried to his houſe. What an air of inquietude appeared in his countenance, and how nearly he was touched with my misfortune, I leave you to imagine: however I ſoon perceived that his concern was alleviated, by the ſatisfaction of meeting me again, and that his grief was mixed with the joy of having it in his power to ſerve me. Take care of the young lady, cried he to thoſe that held me up; carry her gently —take time—there—ſoftly; for at that time he did not ſpeak to me; it ſeemed to me, that he forbore it on account of my condition, which would not permit him to expreſs his tenderneſs in any other manner, than in his care for my ſafety.

For my part, I likewiſe ſpoke to the other people, but not at all to him; I durſt not even look upon him, which made me the more impatiently long for it. Sometimes indeed I could not avoid giving him a tranſient glance, in ſpite of all my reſolutions to the contrary: what my eyes ſaid to him, I can't determine; but his made ſuch tender anſwers, that there muſt have been ſomething very moving in mine to have deſerved them: This made me bluſh, and put my heart into ſuch a ſituation, that I was at a loſs how to behave. I felt a mixture of trouble, pleaſure, and fear: I ſay fear; for a girl who is unacquainted with the world, and a novice in theſe affairs, don't know how far ſuch an adventure may carry her; ſhe is involved in a thouſand difficulties, which overwhelm her, and, poſſeſſed by them, ſhe is no more herſelf; mean while the novelty of the ſituation affrights her extremely. It is true ſhe finds a pleaſure in it; but it is a pleaſure that is dangerous, and deceitful: nay, even her modeſty is alarmed, its delicacy is ſhocked and frighted at the apprehenſions of an impending danger.

Love

Love does not deceive us, nor make us blind to futurity; it no ſooner ſhews itſelf, but it lets us know what it is, and what we are to expect; for when it has taken poſſeſſion of the heart, the ſoul feels it maſter there; it indeed flatters it with the hopes of happineſs, yet, with an open and profeſſed authority, it aſks no advice, but boldly tells it the ſlavery it is to expect. This I think is the ſtate of mind in which I found my ſelf at that time, and I believe it is the ſame, with all young girls in the like circumſtances.

I WAS at laſt carried to Valville's houſe, for that was the young gentleman's name, and laid upon a couch in the parlour. And indeed I really wanted immediate help, for I felt a great deal of pain in my foot; but Valville, eager to ſerve me, had prevented even my wiſhes, the ſurgeon was ſent for and ordered to come with all poſſible ſpeed, and in a few minutes he was there.

I PASS over the apologies I made, during this ſhort interval, for the trouble I had given him; they were the common compliments, which every body knows how to uſe on ſuch occaſions. All that was particular, was, that I ſpoke with the air of a perſon ſenſible of an obligation, who was conſtrained to make excuſes for a trouble which could not be avoided; and he anſwered in a tone which prepared me for a more ſerious converſation. Even our mutual glances were a kind of prelude to it; he did not caſt one at me, which did not plainly ſay, "I love you": nor did I know what to do with mine, becauſe they would have ſaid ſo too.

WE were both in this ſilent intercourſe, when the ſurgeon entered; who on the account Valville gave him of my accident told us, that my foot muſt be examined. I bluſhed at this propoſal, from a ſentiment of modeſty; however, I compoſed my

ſelf

ſelf with the thought that I had the prettieſt little foot in the world; and that tho' Valville was going to ſee it, it was not my fault, ſince neceſſity obliged me to ſhew it before him; and that it was my fall, not I, that ought to bear the blame.

WE frequently imagine our conſcience very ſcrupulous and tender; not on account of the ſacrifice we make it, but from the artifices we employ to deceive and impoſe upon it, and thereby prevent our making it any ſacrifices at all.

I MADE ſome difficulty of ſhewing it, and was willing to pull off only my ſhoe; but this was not enough: I muſt by all means, ſaid the ſurgeon, ſee the bottom of the evil, I can do nothing without that: Upon this the houſekeeper was called, who was ordered to pull off my ſtocking, while Valville and the ſurgeon retired out of decency and reſpect.

WHEN my foot was ready, the ſurgeon examined and felt it, to find out the hurt; the good man to be a better judge of the caſe, ſtooped low, becauſe he was old; while Valville, in conformity to him, took inſenſibly the ſame poſture, and ſtooped as low as he, becauſe he was young; for tho' he was no great judge of the diſorder, he was of the prettineſs of my foot, with which he ſeemed extremely ſatisfied. For my part, I did not ſay a word, and took no notice that I ſaw him; it would not have been modeſt even to appear to ſuſpect the attraction that drew him thither; and beſides, I ſhould have ſpoiled all, if I had let him ſee I underſtood his little artifice; for I ſhould have been obliged to take advantage of it, and appear more reſerved; and perhaps might have put him to the expence of a bluſh. The human heart is very unaccountable in its ſenſations, for there are moments when it is confuſed and ſhocked at being taken in a

fact,

fact, only becauſe it had determined to conceal it; and ſuch diſappointments always humble us.—I acted in conſequence of this reaſoning; and tho' the preſence of Valville confuſed me a little, it was only becauſe he ſaw me, not becauſe he loved to ſee me. Whereabouts do you feel the pain, ſaid the ſurgeon to me, touching it with his finger, is it there? Yes, Sir, ſaid I, juſt there. I think, ſays Valville, with an innocent air, laying his finger on it too, it looks a little inflamed here. Come, come, added the ſurgeon, the damage will ſoon be repaired, it is only ſitting ſtill to-day; a linnen rag dipped in brandy, and a little repoſe will cure it. Immediately my foot was bathed with brandy, the compreſs put upon it, and my ſtocking pulled on; when the ſurgeon took his leave, and left me alone with Valville. I did not queſtion, but I ſhould be obliged to ſtay here ſome time, and that he would inſiſt upon my dining before I went; but I did not care to let him know I had the leaſt thought of it. After all the obligations you have conferred upon me, ſaid I, may I be ſo bold as to beg you would add one more, Sir, and order a chair or a coach to be called to carry me home? No, Miſs, anſwered he, I can't conduct you home for ſome hours yet; your fall is but juſt over, and beſides, you are ordered to repoſe your ſelf a little; and I muſt on that account inſiſt on your ſtaying dinner: all that is neceſſary is to ſend home, to let your friends know where you are, that they may not be in pain for you.

THIS indeed was very neceſſary; for my abſence would doubtleſs have very much alarmed Mrs. du Tour: and beſides, what would Valville have thought of me, if I had ſeemed to be my own miſtreſs, and had no body concerned for me, no body to give an account to of my actions. Such a ſtate

of

of independance would have appeared with a very ill grace; for it is very improper a girl ſhould be out of tuition at ſo tender an age; and eſpecially conſidering the figure I made; for there is but a ſmall tranſition from being lovely, to being unworthy of being loved. See the inconvenience that attends beauty! it gives a probability that we are guilty, upon the leaſt ſuſpicion that we are ſo; and on a thouſand occaſions weighs down the ſcale againſt us. But let it conclude what it will; the charms of beauty are too pleaſing to us ever to diſguſt the poſſeſſor; for we love ourſelves, and therefore love to appear amiable to others. In a word, beauty inſpires either with love or deſire: if it is love, let us be ever ſo auſtere, it is welcome; for the pleaſure of being beloved, finds always a place either in our hearts or our vanity: Suppoſing it only inſpires with deſire; there is nothing loſt by it; our virtue is indeed affronted, but our reſentment turns upon him that called it in queſtion, and not upon thoſe charms which were the cauſe of it.

But to return, you are now uſed to my digreſſions.

I have told you, that an abſolute independance would not have appeared to my advantage; but Valville did not view me in that light; his reſpect plainly ſhewed the contrary, his looks and behaviour expreſſed a tenderneſs and fear of offending, only due to innocence and modeſt virtue: but upon the leaſt diſtruſt, he would have no longer repoſed an intire confidence in me; for the very ſhadow of guilt would have made me ſink in his eſteem. But could you believe it? in ſpite of all I ſhould riſque by ſeeming independant, I was in ſuſpence, what part I ſhould take; and can you imagine the reaſon? It was becauſe I could give him no other direction than to a retail linnen-draper's, ſince I could ſend

to

to none but to Mrs. du Tour's; a woman that with ſome reaſon I might be aſhamed of. Methought it would be the greateſt diſapointment to a man of quality like Valville, whom I ſaw ſurrounded with ſervants, to find the girl he loved ſo unſuitable to one of his condition; and that tho' I had the air and appearance of a lady of diſtinction, I was far from being one. How could I have the courage to ſay, Go to Mrs. du Tour's at ſuch a ſign where I lodge! How mortifying the expreſſion! If my fault had been not to have been born of rich parents; had I but a noble extraction and no fortune, pride, though ſtript naked, would have ſomething to feed upon; I ſhould only appear deprived of the ſuperfluities and conveniencies of life, but not of my right to the honours of it. But ſo great a ſhare of politeneſs and ſubmiſſive reſpect, which he was pleaſed to expreſs, was not in the leaſt due to a paltry ſhop-maid, who muſt have appeared bold indeed to have permitted it; and might juſtly expect to be treated with contempt and inſolence, as a puniſhment of her preſumption and aſſurance. This was the reflection that I feared Valville would make. Methought I heard him ſay to himſelf, How! is that all? and the ſharpneſs of that little ſoliloquy would have been ſo cutting from him, that I choſe to appear in a dubious light, rather than in a ridiculous one, and to let him queſtion my virtue, rather than laugh at my coſt, and ridicule the reſpect he had ſhewn me. Thus I concluded that I would ſend to no body, and that I would ſay that it was not at all neceſſary.

I WAS ſenſible this was a very wrong reſolution, but don't you know that we are too often more proud than virtuous, more vain than honeſt; and conſequently, more ſcrupulous when our vanity, than when our honour is concerned? But don't be frighted,

frighted, though I took this reſolution, I did not follow it; for in the agitation theſe contending paſſions raiſed in my heart, I fixed ſuddenly upon an expedient, whereby my miſerable pride was ſatisfied. My heart, indeed, would be ſeverely afflicted; but what ſignifies what our hearts ſuffer, provided our vanity be ſerved by it? we can diſpenſe with repoſe, pleaſure, and too often with honour itſelf, to make peace with that.——This expedient was abſolutely to inſiſt upon returning home immediately.——What! leave Valville ſo ſoon, ſay you? Yes, I had the courage to reſolve upon it, and to ſnatch myſelf from a converſation ſo extremely deſirable. Valville loved me, and though he had not yet told me ſo, he would have time to make the pleaſing declaration if I ſtay'd. I loved him, he was ignorant of it, at leaſt I thought ſo, but I ſhould not be able to conceal it. He would have had the pleaſure of ſeeing me ſenſible, I of ſhewing I was ſo, and both the ſoft delight of enjoying each others company. O how many ſweets are contained in this idea! ſweets unmixed with the leaſt degree of ſenſuality! It is all rapture! The ſoul at firſt ſees, and could repeat the various charms of ſuch a tender interview.—What a ſacrifice was I going to make!

THESE ſenſations and reflections, though ſo long in relating, paſſed through my mind almoſt in an inſtant.

PRAY don't make yourſelf uneaſy, Miſs, ſaid Valville, with a tender and preſſing air, and taking my hand with a modeſt baſhfulneſs, let me beg of you not to look uneaſy, ſay but where you live, and a ſervant ſhall fly immediately, and put your friends out of their pain for your abſence. Pray think of it ſeriouſly, you are not in a condition to go yet: come, it is pretty late, ſtay but dinner,

and you ſhall go as ſoon as it is over. Why, my dear charmer, continued he, do you heſitate? You will have nothing to reproach yourſelf with for ſtaying here. No body can blame you for it, ſince your accident compels you to it.——No, Sir, replied I, I intreat you to permit me to retire. None can be more ſenſible of your civility than I am; but I can't abuſe it. I don't live far from hence; and ſince I find myſelf much better, I beg it as a favour that you will permit me to go.——But, Miſs, reſumed Valville, what can be the motive of your reluctance for ſtaying in ſo natural ſo innocent a conjuncture as this?—As for reluctance, I'll aſſure you, Sir, I have none, ſaid I, but it will be fitter for me to be at home, ſince a coach may be had. What, ſo ſoon! cried he, with a look full of the moſt tender ſoftneſs. It muſt be ſo, replied I, caſting down my eyes with a melancholy air, which he ſeemed to underſtand; for hearts underſtand one another; and it is very probable he perceived what paſſed in mine; for he took my hand again, with an air of ſuch undiſſembled tenderneſs, and ſuch a quick and rapid tranſport, that if he had ſaid a thouſand times, *I love you*, he could not have expreſſed it more intelligibly. It was impoſſible I ſhould be miſtaken. I ſaw a lover before me, who ſhewed himſelf without diſguiſe, ſo that with all my artifice I could not ſeem to evade the evidence of his paſſion. He, full of ſuſpence, waited to ſee how I received this ſilent declaration: but his looks ſhewed that he thought he had not much reaſon to be diſſatisfied. I remained ſurprized, ſilent and confuſed; which was a proof I was charmed too. For when a man is indifferent or diſagreeable to us, we acquit ourſelves more gracefully, and are never put into this diſorder; we know in every reſpect how to behave; but it is only love that ſoftens our minds, and throws us into this confuſion.

I WAS in this ſituation, my hand trembling in Valville's, which I made no effort to draw back, and which I gave up entirely to him. My power of action ſeemed for a moment ſuſpended; whilſt ſeized by I know not what attraction, I was ſoftened into a tender inactivity. At laſt, however, I uttered ſome words, but without order or connection; which in ſome meaſure diminiſhed the confuſion my ſilence began to occaſion; and which ſupplied the place of ſomething, I did not, though I ought to have ſaid: ſuch as——Well, well, Sir; pray, what means this? This was all I could ſay to him. To which was added a ſigh, that took away, perhaps, all the little force I had given to my words. However I ſoon recovered myſelf; for the emotions with which I was inchanted, were diſſipated ſuddenly on my reflecting, that it was indecent to betray ſo much weakneſs and irreſolution before a man every way my ſuperior. What do you mean, Sir? ſaid I, drawing back my hand with ſpirit and reſolution; but with a tone, which expreſſed that I was juſt awoke from this ſoft diſorder. But I can hardly believe he was in a condition to obſerve it; for he ſeemed at leaſt as much captivated by that deluding paſſion as I: though it is not improbable, but that he might ſee and take notice of every thing; for he was not ſo young a lover, and therefore, not ſo liable to loſe his preſence of mind. Such a one may be moved, and feel all the delicacy that can fill a human breaſt; but he won't be perplexed; he preſerves his judgment, while it is only novices that loſe it. But what danger is not that maid expoſed to, who falls into the hands of a pretended lover, that knows how to take advantage of her weakneſs? As for me I ran no hazard with Valville. My diſorder was too ſhort for him to gain any advantage by it. I had nothing indeed to

reproach him with: I had inſpired him with ſentiments to my advantage, but his love was nōt ſo violent as tender. When a man admires a woman in this manner in the beginning of his paſſion, it makes his heart honeſt; inſpires him with virtue; makes him delight in the refined pleaſure of loving, and reſpectfully treating the object of his affections. This is the firſt employ of a tender generous mind; it dreſſes the object of his love in all imaginable dignity and worth: nor is it without its own reward; for it is attended with greater, far greater delight, than all the pleaſures of the ſenſualiſt or debauchee: and where a man is incapable of this happineſs, he himſelf is the greateſt loſer: but probably, Madam, you would think it gain to you was I not quite ſo impertinent.

THEREFORE to proceed, I was intreating Valville to let me go, with a grave and confuſed look: Indeed, Sir, you ſurprize me, ſaid I; you ſee yourſelf it is not without the greateſt reaſon I reſolve to retire, and that it is abſolutely neceſſary I ſhould do ſo. You ſhall, Miſs, indeed you ſhall, you ſhall go immediately, anſwered he gravely; I am going to give orders that you may, ſince it is painful to you to continue here; and I am afraid, I am become quite diſagreeable to you, by a ſudden emotion which I could not help; for I own I love you, and could ſpend all the time we ſhould be together, nay, my whole life, in making you ſenſible of it. And if this pleaſing ſubject had laſted for my life too, I think I ſhould not have been weary, ſo ſenſible was the joy the dear declaration gave me; which, though flattering to my hopes, embarraſſed and confuſed me. This I would willingly have hid from Valville, but was too unſkilled in deceit to know what countenance to aſſume for that purpoſe. What he had juſt ſaid, required an anſwer; but

joy

joy naturally renders us ſilent, and this ſenſation poſſeſſed my whole ſoul. I thought my preſent ſituation of mind not proper to be diſcovered, and being ſo little unacquainted with the art of diſſembling, I continued ſpeechleſs with eyes caſt down. Why don't you anſwer, ſaid Valville? won't you favour me with one word, Miſs? ſure you won't leave me in this dilemma. Has the innocent liberty I have juſt taken, made me ſo odious to you, that all the actions of my future life are incapable of making reparation?

In the midſt of this tender pleading, he again took my hand in his, and with all the warmth of the moſt paſſionate lover, kiſſed it every moment, always begging pardon for his preſumption. But the beſt of the joke was, that I thought *that* a ſufficient reparation for the fault, and innocently enough received it as ſuch, when in fact, it was only repeating it; though I don't think either of us perceived it. Will you then give me no anſwer, ſaid Valville? muſt I have the cruel mortification to think you hate me? To which I anſwered with a ſigh, No, Sir, I don't hate you: I have no reaſon to hate you: you have never given me the leaſt provocation. Why then don't you anſwer, returned he, warmly? I have confeſſed to you already that I love you, I intreat you therefore tell me frankly, whether this declaration is agreeable to you or not. Though I dread to aſk; though the happineſs of my life depends upon your anſwer, I beg you'd put me out of this cruel, this inſupportable ſuſpence. ——What would you have me ſay, Sir, ſaid I, I ſcarce know what love is; every perſon diſguiſes his heart under that tender name. And while the virtuous do honour to this ſoft paſſion, the vicious make it a cloak for every villainy; the blackeſt crimes, and the moſt complicated guilt, ruined

innocence and bleeding honour, and all the blackeſt ſcenes that even *hatred* and *malice* could invent, are concealed under this ſacred name, *love*. But pardon me, Sir, I believe you entirely incapable of baſeneſs and deceit; at leaſt my heart perſuades me to think ſo. This, however, I muſt acknowledge, that I am extremely obliged to you. And tho' it is probable it will never be in my power to return the obligation, I ſhall never forget the ſervice you have done me in ſo great an emergency.—You will never forget it, cried he briſkly; but how muſt I know, Miſs, you will remember me, if this is the laſt time I ſhall ever ſee you. I beg you will not let me loſe you for ever. If it be true, that you have no averſion to me, don't make me miſerable, by tearing from me the better half of my ſoul. If we part now, perhaps I may never ſee you more. It was to day a mere chance that brought you to me: but how ſhall I be again bleſſed, if you will never let me know where to find you? I ſhould for ever ſeek you, for ever deplore your loſs in vain. ———I own it will be in vain, anſwered I, with an ingenuous freedom, and a look that ſeemed to pity us both. Well, Miſs, continued he, putting my hand to his mouth, (for that was now become a trifle, which was hardly thought on,) let me know who are your parents or guardians, tell me what I muſt do to make myſelf agreeable to them; I earneſtly beg you will not deny me this conſolation before you go.

SCARCE had he ſpoke this, when a valet entering, Order the horſes to be put to the coach, ſaid he, to carry this lady home.———This ſtep, which I had not foreſeen, broke all my meaſures, and caſt my vanity into all the agonies, from which it had juſt been delivered.—It was not Valville's coach I wanted: The petty linnen-draper would not

not have eſcaped the mortification of being known. I imagined he would have ordered a ſervant to call a hack, and that I ſhould have gone alone, and have nothing farther to do, but to tell the coachman where to drive me. Here, thought I, I ſhall evade all the confuſion and ſhame which this little ſhop occaſions me. This had already been the ſource of a thouſand different agitations, which returned now in their full force; for he would not have failed to enquire, where did you leave her? whilſt the ſervant would innocently enough have anſwered, at ſuch a ſhop. And even here, I had only been mortified by halves, and could only have bluſhed at a diſtance, ſince I ſhould have been abſent at this diſcovery of my meanneſs: but Valville had deſtined for me a ſhame more humbling and more compleat.

I INTEND, Miſs, ſaid he, as ſoon as the ſervant was gone, to conduct you home myſelf, attended with my houſe-keeper, whom you have ſeen already. I fancy this precaution is more than neceſſary on my part, after what has happened; this I am bound to out of civility. It is a ſudden thought I have happily fixed upon, which I hope will be agreeable to you. O Sir, cried I, what do you propoſe to me? to be conducted home by you! by a gentleman of your age! No, Sir, I can't be guilty of ſuch imprudence. You don't conſider what people would make of this inconſiderate action: The world is malicious; it takes a pride in tarniſhing our brighteſt virtues by foul imputations; how careful ſhould we be then of giving the leaſt room for this ill-natured unfriendly vice to triumph, and diſplay its barbarous eloquence. Though I have too good an opinion of you, Sir, to be at all afraid of truſting myſelf with you: yet, on this account, I muſt beg to be excuſed. I had rather, Sir, at-

tempt to go home on foot, and limp thither as well as I can, than accept your offer.

THIS diſcourſe would not admit of a reply, tho' it ſeemed to touch him to the heart. You ſhall go, Miſs, cried he in his turn, riſing up haſtily, with a countenance that expreſſed the keeneſt grief and deſpair.——You ſhall be obeyed.——You are reſolved never to ſee me more; never to let me know where you may be found: what vain pretences, what unaccountable fears do you make uſe of! No, my dear, dear inſenſible, there is not the leaſt appearance that this can be the motive of your refuſal. You can't have ſuch a groundleſs ſcruple. You are hurt with a fall at my door: I am there myſelf, and with a crowd of ſpectators, am a witneſs of your misfortune: you can't ſtand: I order you to be brought into my houſe in order to ſend you home. Nothing could happen more ſimple, and more natural; nothing more innocent, than that finding you in theſe circumſtances, I ſhould carry you home to your friends; and take this occaſion of making myſelf known to them. But you are againſt it. Doubtleſs you have reaſons for it. I am either diſagreeable to you, or elſe you are pre-engaged. Upon this, without giving me time to reply, vex'd at the ſilent melancholy which I ſtill preſerved, he ſtept haſtily to the parlour-door, and called very loud to one of his ſervants, who came running; mean while his ſoul ſeemed imbittered with every contending paſſion, and the painful ſtruggle between love and deſpair, was viſible in every look and every action. Fly, cried he, call a chair, and if one can't be got, a coach; the lady won't accept of mine. Then returning to me he added, Be ſatisfied, Miſs, you ſhall have your w ſhes; you have nothing more to fear from me, or both you and your parents ſhall be eternally unknown

unknown to me, unleſs you tell me your name, and this I have not the leaſt reaſon to expect. To this I made no anſwer, nor indeed, was I able to make any, my tears had taken away the uſe of my ſpeech: full of the moſt melting reflections, I held down my head to prevent his diſcovering my weakneſs; nor do I think a lady of ſo tender a mould as you, Madam, will be ſurprized at it, if you conſider the ſtate of my mind at that time; how cruelly I had been agitated, and how much my courage had been exhauſted.

See the different mortifications I had been obliged to undergo—pondering, weighing, and making eſſays upon my ſoul, to compare its troubles, in order to know towhich I ſhould give the ſad preference: yet what ſervice had it been to me, to fix upon the painful reſolution of leaving Valville? was it leſs difficult to accompliſh my deſign of remaining unknown? No, certainly, he offers me his coach, and propoſes to conduct me home himſelf; at laſt, he only deſires to know my name, a requeſt ſo ſmall, that, without the appearance of ingratitude, I can't deny him; but alas! I knew it not! my firſt misfortune deprived me of it, except Marianne, which could be no direction to him, and could only point out my extreme wretchedneſs. To what a perplexed ſituation was I now reduced! rudely to leave Valville without regard either to gratitude or good breeding; to baniſh myſelf from him, as from one with whom I intended to break off all acquaintance. To leave for ever the man that loved me! whom I ſhould for ever regret the loſs of, and him too who had taught me to feel I had a heart! (for we only know we have one when we begin to love.)

Beauty in diſtreſs finds an eaſy paſſage to the ſoul, the innocent ſufferer naturally raiſes compaſ-

ſion in every generous mind; but where love has taken poſſeſſion, it adds an additional charm to every grace, melts every paſſion into tenderneſs, every thought into love. The generous Valville, quite diſconſolate at the thought of my leaving him without a hope of ſeeing me any more, was ready to give vent to his deſpair; but my tears ſoon gave a turn to his paſſion, and my grief in a moment made him forget his own. I never ſaw a tender compaſſion painted more lively on the countenance. Bleſs me! Madam, what means theſe tears, cried he, throwing himſelf at my feet with an air of aſtoniſhment, and ſome rays of a dawning hope in his eyes? Why, my dear charmer, do you weep? Sure I have not been ſo unfortunate as to offend you! if I have, it was without deſign: pray ſpeak, and deliver me from this cruel uncertainty. What! ſilent ſtill, added he, kiſſing my hand with inexpreſſible tenderneſs, tell me, oh! tell me what diſturbs you: Can you heſitate a moment whether you ſhall open your heart to him, who has given you his own; to him who ſwears to be for ever yours; to him who loves you more than life; in a word, who loves you as you deſerve to be loved. Sure, my dear, I have a right to a little of your confidence; for it is impoſſible I can ſee your tears, without impatiently longing to remove your uneaſineſs: and would it be juſt to give me ſo great a concern, without putting it in my power to eaſe myſelf of part of my anxieties by removing yours?———

Would you know me, cried I ingenuouſly, you muſt ſend to Mrs. du Tour's———To Mrs. du Tour's, ſaid Valville, what the linnen-draper! I ſuppoſe, Miſs, ſhe is to inform your parents where you are. Pray who muſt the man ſay he comes from? At this queſtion I was again con-

fou-

founded and at a loſs for an anſwer: His want of penetration gave me the greateſt confuſion: for I had ſillily imagined, that the bare naming Mrs. du Tour would have informed him that I lived there; and that here would have been an end of every mortifying queſtion. I made no anſwer, but my ſilence had ſuch a remarkable air of confuſion in it, that at laſt Valville found out what I had not the courage to tell him. What, Miſs, ſaid he, do you lodge at Mrs. du Tour's? Yes, Sir, anſwered I, with a tone of humility, I was not born to this ſtate; but the greateſt misfortunes have reduced me to it. Pray, my dear, dry up thoſe tears, returned he, preſenting me his hand with an air of tenderneſs, that had ſomething in it ſo honeſt and reſpectful, that is was a kind of reparation of the uneaſineſs I had juſt endured.

My hiſtory, upon which we were entering, would doubtleſs have been the ſubject of a long converſation, if we had not been interrupted by a noiſe at the parlour door, where a lady appeared leaning upon Mr. de Climal, who immediately fixed his eyes upon the poor Marianne, half reclined upon a couch, her eyes wet with tears, and in converſation with a young man, whoſe humble and tender poſture, declared their ſubject was love; and that he was ſaying to me, "I adore you;" for he was kneeling at my feet: but what was ſtill more unlucky, was, that at this moment his head reclined upon one of my hands, which it might be thought he was kiſſing. Was not this a very amuſing picture for Mr. de Climal?

I wish I was able to deſcribe his looks on this occaſion: you will at firſt imagine that he bluſhed, and was out of countenance; but this is only a rough ſketch of the man. Imagine you ſee him ſtaring about him with a wild confuſed look, but

ſeeing nothing. He ſhrugs his ſhoulders, his arms has a ridiculous motion, and he ſeems at a loſs what attitude to give his body, or how to mould his face, in order to wipe off the diſorder that was painted there. Mr. de Climal was amorous and fond of me; judge then how jealous he muſt be. Theſe paſſions gave him ſtrong and violent agitations, but his pretended piety forbad his diſcovering the leaſt degree either of jealouſy or love. But they appeared in ſpite of all his endeavours to hide them: he was ſenſible of it, and this made him aſhamed: he was then afraid his ſhame ſhould be diſcovered: and all this together gave ſuch a comical air of uncertainty, ridiculouſneſs and folly to his motions, that made it much more eaſy to form an idea of than deſcribe him. But this was not all, his diſorder had another motive that I was ignorant of: for Valville, in riſing up, with a low voice cried, Oh, here is my uncle!

More ſingular ſtill was this remarkable chance. I could not help bluſhing at the ſight of de Climal, but his relation to Valville increaſed ſtill more my confuſion. While the looks which I caſt at him, if he obſerved them, ſhewed a conſciouſneſs of having liſtened with pleaſure to the diſcourſe of Valville; for I had the air of an accomplice viſible it my countenance. We were in fact three moſt ridiculous figures. But the lady, who entered with Mr. de Climal, did not ſeem to take notice of our diſorder; for my youth and beauty, and the tender poſture of Valville, I believe took up her whole attention. She opened the converſation, with an agreeable air of gaiety: I can't blame you, Sir, ſaid ſhe to Valville, you are in good company, but I believe it a little dangerous. Sir, I don't think your heart is ſafe; added ſhe, ſaluting us with a ſmile. At firſt he could make no anſwer, but a

ſmile

ſmile for want of having ſome thing to ſay. Mr. de Climal ſmiled too, but with ſuch an ill grace, that it appeared forced and unnatural. He ſeemed entirely undetermined what part he ought to take in the adventure; perplexed too to know how I would behave; unreſolved whether he ſhould know me or not, and how I would act in this particular.

On the other hand, being equally at a loſs how to behave to him, I obſerved his conduct towards me, that I might conform myſelf to it; but as his ſimpering air could give no light into his intentions, my manner of ſaluting him was not more deciſive, and left him in as great an uncertainty as his countenance had done me. In ſhort, I both did too much and too little; in one half of my behaviour, I ſeemed to know him; in the other, to be entirely ignorant of him. It was a perfect contradiction to itſelf; and ſeemed to ſay *yes* and *no*, and yet not perfectly either.

Valville obſerved this equivocal, unintelligible behaviour; for he has told me ſince that he was ſtruck with it.——He had for ſome time ſuſpected his uncle was not what he was willing to appear. He had learnt from certain parts of his conduct, to queſtion his religion; and to ſuſpect his oſtentatious appearance of ſuperior piety to be all a farce, and put on only to hide the immorality of his ſecret vices: he ſaw I was amiable; found I lived at Mrs. du Tour's; that it was with many tears I confeſſed it; and all this added to my confuſed behaviour to Mr. de Climal, who had not a countenance leſs diſcompoſed and unſettled, gave too much reaſon for theſe melancholy conjectures.

I forgot to tell you that I ſeemed as if going to riſe, in order to pay my reſpects to them more decently. No, Miſs, no, ſaid Valville, pray keep

keep your place; this lady, I am ſure, won't allow it, when ſhe knows you have hurt your foot; and as for the gentleman, added he, turning to his uncle, I believe he will diſpenſe with it, becauſe you ſeem to know each other. I think, I have not that honour, ſaid Mr. de Climal immediately, with a colour which ſeemed to revenge his breach of truth in ſpite of his aſſurance; pray, Miſs, have you ſeen me any where, continued he, with a look which begged me to be ſecret. I don't know, returned I, with a tone leſs bold than my words; but, I think, your face is not quite unknown to me. I believe I have ſeen you, Sir, ſomewhere. Very likely, replied he; but what is the matter, has the lady had a fall? To this queſtion his nephew made no anſwer: his inquietude ſo took up his thoughts, that he did not ſeem to hear him. Yes, Sir, cried I, all confuſed as I was, for my ſhare of his lye, which I was ſupporting, and for which I was conſcious I muſt bare an equal ſhare of guilt, even in the opinion of Valville, who I found ſaw through the deceit; yes, Sir, I had a fall juſt by as I was coming from maſs, and was brought in here, becauſe I was unable to walk home.

But, ſaid the lady, you ought to have ſome help; a ſtrain may be of ill conſequence. Are you alone, Miſs? have you no body with you? Neither a footman nor your woman? No, Madam, ſaid I, aſhamed of the honour ſhe did me, for which I reproached my dreſs as the cauſe; I don't live far from hence. Well, added ſhe, we ſhall go to dinner in a quarter of an hour, and then we will conduct you home.

What again! ſaid I to myſelf; ſure the whole world is in league to mortify my pride; muſt every body be carrying me home, for no other

reaſon,

reaſon, but becauſe I have no home but what I am aſhamed of. This lady, who was talking of attendants, how ſtrangely would ſhe have been ſurprized, had ſhe been told my circumſtances! Inſtead of the fine lady, ſhe would have found an indigent impertinent girl, a ſecret acquaintance of the hypocritical Mr. de Climal: for I muſt have appeared at this time in this diſadvantageous light. And what then would have become of his reputation for remarkable ſanctity, after his denying that he knew me? and ſhould we not both have made a fine appearance, if Mrs. du Tour and Toinon ſhould, according to cuſtom, have been at the door, and cried out, Bleſs me, Sir, is it you? What Marianne! how came you to ſtay ſo long, child? what have you been doing ſince church-time! how could you think you would not have been wanted?

The diſcovery of my having abetted a falſhood was indeed the true reaſon why I ought to have trembled, the real diſgrace which merited my attention; and not the meanneſs of my circumſtances: but tho' this was ſo very obvious, I did not at firſt ſufficiently conſider it. Thus, Madam, we are generally more jealous of the vain applauſe and conſideration of the multitude, than deſirous of the value and eſteem of the wiſe and thinking few; and conſequently not enough ſolicitous after our own integrity, the only true honour; while the trifling blandiſhments of life are purſued with the greateſt aſſiduity. If we are admired, it is the perſon, not the virtue, that is the ſubject of admiration; you may value our good qualities as much as you will, but while you conſider them ſeparate from us who poſſeſs them, we are not at all affected by it; you muſt conſider them as ours to make your commendations acceptable. By this way of thinking

ing we are taught to look upon virtue as ſomething foreign to us; but ſelf-love and vanity as the natural inhabitants of the ſoul, the ſpring and motive to action. Our ſelf-complacency and ambition we conſider as part of ourſelves, but our virtue only as our ornament. The firſt as natural, but the laſt acquired; and conſequently not, like them, neceſſary to our being. Though this reaſoning ſoothed my pride, yet it was far from giving me ſolid reaſon to approve of my conduct with reſpect to Mr. de Climal; for ſuppoſing this to be the caſe, can ſelf-love teach us to make ourſelves unlovely? can ſelf-love make us dare to do an action, which it muſt out of the ſame principle conceal? or, in fine, can this attribute of the ſoul excite us to an act that will ſtain our inward purity, involve our minds in anarchy and confuſion, and make us, inſtead of revering and loving, loath and deteſt ourſelves? But I have done. Theſe reflections are not ill placed, though they are a great deal too long, but my next ſhall be ſhorter.

Mr. de Climal and I were at a loſs how to eſcape the danger into which this lady's civility had caſt us, in offering to wait upon me home. Could he avoid lending us his coach? or could I refuſe to accept it? both were very difficult. He turned pale, and I remained ſilent: while his eyes ſaid, draw me out of this perplexed affair; mine ſaid, draw us out yourſelf: and our ſilence began to grow remarkable, when a ſervant came to tell Valville, that the coach which he had ſent for was at the door. This ſaved us: but the old gentleman began to be ſo confident, that he was even bold enough to abuſe the ſecurity we were in, and carried his aſſurance ſo far as to ſay; We don't want the coach now, you may ſend it back: and this he ſaid with ſuch a frank air, as if he had all along deſigned it; and as if he had

not

not heſitated or made the leaſt difficulty of it. I think, however, that tho' he was ſo great an hypocrite at that time, I ought a little to ſoften my expreſſions; ſince notwithſtanding this black part of his character, which I can't even think on without deteſtation, his memory ought to be dear to me. His repentance was, I don't queſtion, ſincere; and as truth will not admit of my leaving out a ſcene of villainy, which will occur in my third part; ſo in juſtice to him, and in gratitude for the benefit I received by his repentance, I ſhall write with pleaſure on that ſubject, which will be a kind of recompence for the uneaſineſs I feel in diſplaying his vices.

I FOUND he truſted to me to give impunity to his aſſurance; and did not fear, that I had either the malice or ſtupidity to make him repent it. No, Sir, anſwered I, I won't give you ſo much trouble, ſince a coach waits for me; and if you, Sir, continued I, turning to Valville, will call ſomebody to help me in, I ſhall be gone immediately. I believe theſe gentlemen, ſaid the lady with an air of gaiety, will be proud of that honour; there is one, pointing to Valville, who will not regret the trouble. Is it not true, added ſhe, looking at him with a ſmile? this gallantry proceeded without doubt from her finding Valville at my feet. But as we are going too, continued ſhe, I muſt tell you what brought us hither; have you any news of Madam de Valville? (this was the young gentleman's mother,) what is ſhe leaving the country? ſhall we ſee her again ſoon? I expect her here, Madam, this week, ſaid Valville, with a troubled and careleſs air; which was but an indifferent proof of his attachment to me; and at which I ſhould perhaps have been diſguſted, had not my thoughts been too much engaged with my own affairs: I immediately recollected that he had, indeed, ſuch cauſe

to

to be diſpleaſed at my conduct as to render his diſſatisfaction too great to be ſmothered in his own breaſt. I ſaw into the motive of his ſadneſs, and this diſcovery covered me with ſhame.——I found his heart diſtracted with the apprehenſion that I did not deſerve his tenderneſs; and that he feared that at laſt he ſhould be obliged to renounce me, and root out his unhappy paſſion. Dear Madam, could any thing be more obliging than this tender fear? Nothing could be more charming, more amiable; nothing more worthy of caſting my ſoul into an humble and tender confuſion than this virtuous diſtruſt: for I approved of his ſentiments; was pleaſed at the honeſty and purity of his heart, which would not ſuffer him to indulge the ſatisfaction of loving a mind leſs amiable than his own.

But notwithſtanding the coldneſs I had obſerved in Valville, after having anſwered the lady's queſtions, he came to me to help me up, and lent me his arm; and as he ſaw Mr. de Climal coming to us, he prevented him, by ſaying, No, Sir, don't attempt to ſupport this lady; you are not ſtrong enough; for I queſtion whether ſhe can ſet her foot to the ground. It will be better to call ſomebody elſe. Upon this Mr. de Climal retired, for a guilty conſcience made him diſtruſt his aſſurance. On this Valville rung a bell, and two of his ſervants came immediately. Come hither, ſaid he, and carry this lady to the coach. I believe I had no need of this ceremony, and that with the help of leaning a little on their arms, I could eaſily have ſupported myſelf; but I was ſo confuſed and diſconcerted, that I let them lead me as they thought fit.

Mr. de Climal and the lady followed me together, and after them came Valville; who, as we paſſed

paſſed through the court, I obſerved, by a ſide-glance I gave him, whiſper to a ſervant.

I WAS ſoon in the coach, when the lady, before ſhe got into her's, inſiſted upon adjuſting me herſelf, that I might ſit eaſy, and not hurt my foot. I returned my compliments for her obliging civility, with an air of confuſion; but what I ſaid to Valville was with a worſe grace ſtill, and which he only anſwered by a low bow, accompanied with a look that ſaid many things, that I perfectly underſtood; but can't ſo well explain, the chief of which was, Oh! what ſhall I think?

AT laſt I parted, with my thoughts in a ſtrange kind of ſuſpence, at a loſs to know what I ſhould think; without either joy or grief, pain or pleaſure. What will all this come to? was all I could ſay in this aſtoniſhment, which left me unable to exerciſe any of the faculties of my mind; only a deep ſigh eſcaped me, that ſeemed to proceed rather from inſtinct than from any particular thought.

IT was in this ſituation I arrived at Mrs. du Tour's: I found her ſitting at the ſhop-door impatiently waiting for my coming home, becauſe dinner was almoſt ready.———I took notice, that ſhe had fixed her eyes ſome time upon me before I got to the door, and that ſhe ſeemed to regard me not as Marianne, but as one that reſembled her ſo much, that ſhe ſeemed to be in a ſurprize: and the coach was already ſtopped before ſhe thought it was me; for ſhe did not imagine I would come home in a coach. At laſt ſhe was forced to know me again. What, Marianne! cried ſhe, is it you? I wonder how you could ſtay ſo long! I did not expect you'd come home in a coach;——— What! was the way from church too far for you? No, Madam, but it was impoſſible for me to walk,

for

for I have had a fall, and have hurt my foot; only be ſo good as to help me into the houſe.

While I was ſpeaking, the coachman opened the door; Come, come, Madam, ſaid he, you are at home, never fear: I'll carry you in in a moment; what ſignifies what ſuch a pretty little thing as you weighs: come, fear nothing, I could carry you farther than your own legs: on which he took me in his arms, carried me like a feather into the ſhop, and ſet me in a chair.

I was no ſooner ſeated, than caſting my eyes croſs the ſtreet, I ſaw at ſome diſtance one of Valville's ſervants, who ſeemed to have been running to keep the coach in ſight; and this probably was the reſult of his whiſpering to him as we went out.

The ſight of this domeſtic, placed as a ſpy upon me, revived all my ſenſibility; I bluſhed to find him a witneſs of the meanneſs of my condition; I knew, that as he had ſeen me with Valville, and ſeen me too treated in all reſpects like a lady of quality, he muſt be in the greateſt ſurprize to find me carried into a ſhop, and to diſcover that I was a ſervant there. This was the firſt reflection I made. And was not this enough to trouble me? It is true it was only a footman; but our pride will not ſuffer us to ſink in the eſteem of even the loweſt without pain; nothing is minute, nothing indifferent to it. Beſides I had no reaſon to doubt but that he was ſent by Valville: Ha! has my maſter been at all this pains for ſuch a one as ſhe! he has been rarely employed! Methought I heard him ſay this with a broad ſmile: for theſe perſons are commonly very fond of a joke, it is a privilege of their ſtation; and they are, eſpecially, proud of an occaſion to debaſe thoſe to their own level, whom they have, through miſtake, honoured as much their ſuperiors: And

on

on this account I feared, that in his report to Valville, he would let ſlip ſome inſulting reflection; or divert himſelf with my circumſtances in ſuch a manner, as to wound the delicacy of his maſter's affection, by making me look deſpicable. I was conſcious I had already ſunk too much in his eſteem; ſince he no longer thought it an honour to ſerve me. Adieu to the delight we have in love, when the glory of inſpiring it is tarniſhed by the apprehenſions that we are unworthy the affection that is caſt upon us, and the lover is obliged to ſtruggle to get the maſtery of a paſſion which he thinks a diſhonour to him; and as this was Valville's caſe, how diſadvantageous to me would have been the leaſt degree of raillery: for it is incredible to think, how much influence the moſt trifling turn of wit, and the minuteſt circumſtance, has over a mind already diſguſted, when ſet in a humorous light, in order to render the object compleatly contemptible. And indeed was this the caſe, Valville's diſdain would have made me more uneaſy than the certainty that I ſhould never ſee him more.

As ſoon as I was ſeated, I took my money out of my pocket to pay the coachman; but Mrs. du Tour, like a woman of experience, thought proper to take it upon herſelf; believing me too young to manage even ſuch little affairs. Let it alone, ſaid ſhe, I'll pay the man myſelf: Where did you take coach? Near the church, ſaid I. Oh that is but juſt by, returned ſhe, counting out ſome ſmall money; here, hold your hand, honeſt man, there is your fare.——That my fare, no miſtreſs, ſaid the coachman, returning her the money, I'll not take it. This is not meaſured by the ell. What does the man mean by the ell, ſaid Mrs. du Tour gravely? Here take your money and be eaſy. We have known what a coach-fare was

before

before to-day.——Well, and you may know what it is to-morrow, for what I care, reply'd he; what does all that *arguify*? give me my fare, I deſire no more; and don't make any words about it. Can't you mind your own buſineſs? Is it you that I carried? did I aſk you for any thing? Nay! the duce take the woman and her ſhilling too! She thinks ſhe is haggling for a bunch of carrots.

Mrs. du Tour happening to be pretty well dreſſed, could not help fancying herſelf a perſon of great importance, and was therefore highly affronted at the inſolence of the coachman, (all this, Madam, I recount purely to divert you;) the bunch of carrots did not ſound well at all in her ears; how was it poſſible that ſuch impudent nonſenſe ſhould come from the mouth of any one that was looking at her? Was there any thing in her air that could inſpire a diſcourſe ſo vulgar? I'll aſſure you! cried ſhe, I think, fellow, you grow very impertinent. Do you think I'll hear all your nonſenſe.——Go,——get about your buſineſs——there is your money——take or leave it; I don't care what you do with it.——What does the fellow mean? I aſſure you, if I call my neighbour, he'll teach you better manners, that he will, and oblige you to ſpeak to people in trade with more civility. Mind the old trull! What do you think of ſhe now; returned the other, true coachman like?——Clear the way; have a care; my lady has got her holyday bib on.——*Ifackins* one would not think there needed ſo much ceremony to ſpeak to her ladyſhip. Sure Mrs. Minx may be ſpoke to——The duce take you, why don't you pay me—were you twenty times a better trader than you are; what ſhould I be the better for that? Muſt not my horſes live? You would not have thoſe fat chops if you were not paid—how d—n'd ugly it looks to be ſtingy!

Bad

BAD examples are contagious, and Mrs. du Tour, who had hitherto kept pretty well within the bounds of that air of dignity ſhe had juſt aſſumed, could hold out no longer; this laſt inſult of the coachman's made her loſe all patience; ſhe inſtantly deſerted the part of a reſponſible woman, which could be no longer of ſervice to her, in order to let the coachman ſee ſhe was not many degrees above him, and was able to conteſt with him, who could be moſt vulgar, and render themſelves moſt contemptible. She acquitted herſelf pretty well, and ſhewed ſhe was not unequal to the taſk.

WHEN ſelf-love in people like her is only ſlightly touched, it may keep a maſtery over the paſſions, and with ſome decency attend to reputation, and that honour which it is tenacious of preſerving; but when it is attacked with affronts too groſs to be regarded by perſons of ſenſe, affronts that ſhould only be looked upon with an eye of contempt as beneath our notice, they throw of all reſtraint, abandon themſelves to the low gratification of an unbridled paſſion; and in this mighty buſtle throw down and trample upon the reputation they are too eager in ſupporting.

HERE Mrs. du Tour, with a torrent of noiſe, diſplayed all the elocution ſhe was miſtreſs of. Why, how now, you blockhead! you drunken dog! with your holiday bib! pray! who do you ſpake to, ſcoundrel? cried ſhe, all in a breath, and running to the counter for her ell. When being thus armed; get along, cried ſhe, get out of my ſhop, fellow, or I'll lay this meaſure over your bones.———D—n you don't ſtrike me, cried the coachman, laying hold of her arm.——— Keep your hands to your ſelf———For———the de'el take me!———if you don't be quiet———I'll ſhew you a fellow that won't be beat. Pox take

you

you, I don't aſk for a farthing more than my due; you ſtinking good-for-nothing jade, is there any thing wrong in that?

THE noiſe they made ſoon drew a mob about the door. Will you let me alone, you black-guard you? ſaid Mrs. du Tour, ſtriving to get her ell from the coachman who had ſeized hold of it. Why don't you get up, Marianne, and call Mr. Ricard? Mr. Ricard! cried ſhe in the ſame breath, (this was our landlord, who lived up two pair of ſtairs, and who happened to be out) Gentlemen, ſaid ſhe, ſpeaking to the mob that crowded before the door, I call you all to witneſs; you ſee how it is; he has aſſaulted me, (but that was not true,) he has abuſed me; run, one of you, run to juſtice Tervier; he knows me very well; it is I that ſerve him with cloth; only tell him it is Madam du Tour. Run, Miſs Kitty; run my good girl, cried ſhe to another, that was ſervant in the neighbourhood; and all this with her cap diſcompoſed by the jerks with the coachman gave her arms, when ſtruggling for her ell. But all her cries were in vain, no body ſtirred. And you may eaſily judge that Mrs. du Tour had not the leaſt help to hope for; ſince there was not one who would deprive himſelf of the pleaſure of ſeeing the concluſion of this hopeful quarrel, when every moment promiſed a diverting cataſtrophe; for they imagined, if ſhe could have ſtruck the coachman who held faſt her ell, it would have opened a very diverting ſcene.

THESE rough and boiſterous paſſions, noiſe, clamour, and inſult, are hardly pardonable in our ſex; whoſe perfection it is to be mild and gentle, and to have a heart all innocence, tenderneſs, and purity; a ſoul at the greateſt diſtance from the brutal paſſions of a fury, and a tongue unuſed to rude and vulgar reproach. For my part, I was ſo uneaſy, and vexed

vexed at her folly, that I could not help inceſſantly crying out; Hold, Madam, pray let him alone. The coachman made himſelf hoarſe, with telling every one he had not his due; that ſhe would make him give her his trouble for nothing; witneſs the ſhilling, which he never mentioned without ſome contemptible epithet: and it is eaſy to gueſs at the uncivil eloquence of a hackney coachman. Had Mrs. du Tour the leaſt regard to decency, ſhe would have carefully avoided a ſcene that muſt neceſſarily make her the ridicule of a mob, as well as of her neighbours. But ſhe gave up all reflection to indulge her eager deſire of making a reply, and was indeed too angry to have very delicate ears.

YES, you dog! yes, twelve pence! you ſhall not have a farthing more, you raſcal, ſaid ſhe. And I ſhan't take them, you twelve devils, for all your curſed tongue, anſwered the coachman. You ſcoundrel, you are not worth twelve pence, returned ſhe; are you not aſhamed, you rogue? What! to come only from the church hither? An ambaſſador's coach may be had as cheap. I wiſh I may die if I give you a farthing more; I would ſee you hanged firſt, continued ſhe, ſhaking her fiſt at him. Only remember this is St. Matthew's day: but the better day the better deed. And to-morrow, you muſt take care of yourſelf, I tell you ſo, who am not ſuch a prate-a-pace as you imagine, but the reputable Madam du Tour, and it ought to be Madam in your mouth, ſirrah; ſince I am Madam with every body elſe, and Madam all the world over. Do you hear that you black-guard ſcrub?

ALL this while ſhe was pulling and ſtruggling to get the meaſure out of the coachman's hand, who held it faſt; and who, by his ſour look, and the ſuddenneſs of his motion, ſeemed inclined to uſe

her as roughly as if ſhe had been of his own ſex, and I believed the poor woman was going to be beat; for a large ugly angry fiſt that he lifted up, and which threatned to puniſh her for having dared to provoke the moderation of a hackney coachman, made me tremble. I made haſte to take eighteen pence out of my pocket, and to give it the fellow. He took it immediately, and then ſhaking the ell in Mrs. du Tour's hand ſo violently, that ſhe was forced to let it go, toſſed it to the further end of the ſhop, and putting his hand to his hat, Bleſſing on you, my ſweet girl, ſaid he, walking off, while the croud opened to the right and left, not ſo much to make way for him, as to give Mrs. du Tour room to follow him, which ſhe would certainly have done, had I not hindered her by holding her faſt. Be quiet, huzzy, do you ſee now what you have done, cried ſhe aloud, I'll never forgive you, Marianne, as long as I live. Don't ſtop me; for if you don't let me go, upon my honour I'll beat you. It is mighty pretty indeed! was it not your money that I was ſaving? But my own ſhilling, pray, who is to return me that, (for her intereſt would not be ſilenced) has he taken that away too? Why did not you give him the ſhop and all? Madam, ſaid I, your money is fallen on the ground; but never mind it; if you don't find it again, I will make it good. And this I ſaid, ſhutting the door with one hand, and holding Mrs. du Tour with the other. A fine uproar indeed, ſaid ſhe, when ſhe ſaw the door ſhut; 'tis mighty pretty! let us ſee, Oh here is the money added ſhe, picking it up as calmly as if nothing had happened. The villain was very lucky not to find Toinon here: I'll aſſure you, ſhe would not have let you make ducks and drakes of your money as you have done. Truly ſhe is a better manager. But then, poor

girl,

girl, ſhe has nothing; but you, thank God, are rich; and have the beſt of treaſures, provided it does but laſt.

Oh, Madam, ſaid I, with ſome impatience, I know I am poor, but don't rally me upon it, I beſeech you. 'Tis ungenerous to inſult the miſerable; it betrays a meanneſs of ſpirit, that every good woman ought to be aſhamed of. I am ſenſible of the ſupplies I have had, and of my own indigence; but I had rather renounce them all, and throw myſelf, friendleſs as I am, upon providence for my ſupport, than to ſtay with you expoſed to ſuch unkind and grating expreſſions. Again! ſaid ſhe, pray what makes the girl think I rally her now? Is it becauſe I ſaid people made her preſents. Well, what if they do, where is the harm of that? they make you preſents, and you take them; you would be a fool if you did not. Why, are gifts to be refuſed? No, to be ſure: but well meant, well taken. And when any body has a mind to give me any thing, I ſhall take it; but I am afraid I ſhall not have ſuch good luck; I am ſure, however, I meant no harm; but you are very touchy. Come, come, lets go to dinner. It will ſoon be time to go to veſpers: upon which ſhe went to table; and I got up and followed her, leaning upon the ell, which Mrs. du Tour had laid upon the counter.

Mrs. du Tour was upon the whole a good ſort of a woman, ſhe meant no ill, though ſhe often ſeemed to do it; for her anger was partly feigned. To bluſter and look big, to aſſume an air of authority, ſhe fooliſhly imagined was neceſſary to make her taken notice of. The clamour of a ſhrill and haſty voice kept up her ſpirits, and inclined her mind to ſomething of the ſame diſpoſition, and from thence proceeded the diſagreeable hints ſhe

gave me; but ſhe was not very tenacious of her fits of ill-humour, ſince they proceeded not ſo much from the diſpoſition of her mind, as the weakneſs of it. Perſons of this character have always a very groveling underſtanding; they may have a few trifling virtues indeed, but they are either merely conſtitutional, or the copies of what they have ſeen in others. They make very little uſe of their reaſon, but to conſider how others would behave in like caſes, without ever attending to the propriety of action, or the beauty and deformity of the two extremes virtue and vice.

WERE I to relate all the diſcourſe ſhe directed to me at dinner, a whole book would ſcarce be ſufficient to contain it. My looks, and ſilence, ſhewed it was far from being agreeable to me: but ſhe no ſooner ſaw my uneaſineſs, than ſhe ſhewed her concern, by her diſagreeable way of apologizing.

WHAT is the matter, Marianne, ſaid ſhe? what makes you ſilent and dull? Does any thing make you uneaſy? Yes, Madam, ſaid I, you have mortified me to the laſt degree.——What! do you think of that ſtill, returned ſhe? lack-a-day, how childiſh you are! What is it that I have ſaid to you? I don't remember any thing of it: do you think when folks are in a paſſion, they mind every word they ſay? bleſs my heart! when people live together, muſt they be ſo touchy, and be affronted at every turn? 'Tis true, I ſaid a word about Mr. de Climal: but ſhould you be uneaſy becauſe he takes care of you, and buys you what you want? I'll lay a wager, that becauſe you have neither father nor mother, you thought I hinted at that; for you are really very jealous, and as Toinon ſays, are always watching people's thoughts; and ſo becauſe you don't know

know who were your parents, you perſuade yourſelf that we have nothing elſe to think on. And ſo as we were talking yeſterday, by chance, with a neighbour about a child that had been dropped and found in an alley, you was in the parlour and overheard us; and I ſuppoſe thought we had been talking of you all the while: I ſaw it plainly by your looks. And now you begin again to-day. But I wiſh I may never eat another morſel as long as I live, if I thought of either father or mother any more than if there never were any ſuch perſons in the *varſal* world. Beſides, is not a foundling like other children? marry if all the children that were dropped were given to the commiſſary, where would be found a houſe big enough to hold them? We don't chuſe our ſtation in this life before we are born; but ſince God is the father of the fatherleſs, charity is not quite dead. Now is not it a good providence that has given you Mr. de Climal? It is true, his deſigns are not over good: but no matter, God has the care of every thing: but if the man's good for nothing, his money is good; ay, that it is, and better than a good chriſtian's, who would not give half ſo much. Come, come, child, I would only make you a good manager; not that I would have you ſtingy; my birth-day is coming, and then, or on your's, or Toinon's or ſo, you may throw away a little money and divert yourſelf. But except theſe times, or at the carnival, or other holidays when you treat us, you ſhould keep your money to yourſelf.

She was in this part of her leſſon, of which ſhe would have never been tired, and part of which was as diſagreeable to me as the reprimands that occaſioned it, when ſomebody knocked briſkly at the door.——Here my adventures become

numerous and intereſting. For I have only two days to ſtay at Mrs du Tour's: and I promiſe that I ſhall trouble you with fewer reflections, if theſe prove diſagreeable to you. You will let me know your ſentiments.

The End of the SECOND PART.

THE

THE VIRTUOUS ORPHAN.

PART III.

YOU are in the right, Madam, I have made you wait too long for the continuation of my hiſtory; I don't excuſe myſelf, I only beg pardon and proceed.

Mrs. du Tour was in this manner preaching up œconomy; which, however, ſhe was willing to diſpenſe with, whenever I had a mind to let her ſhare in my extravagance, and regale her and her family at my expence; when ſhe was interrupted, as I told you, by a knocking at the door. Who is there? cried ſhe immediately, keeping her ſeat, who knocks there? I thought I had juſt heard a coach ſtop, and a voice anſwered to Mrs. du Tour, which was not altogether unknown to me. I believe, ſaid I, it is Mr. de Climal. Do you think ſo, ſaid ſhe? ſtarting up and running to the door. Oh, dear Sir! cried ſhe, I aſk your pardon. Upon my word, I ſhould have made more haſte, if I thought it had been you. Marianne and I have juſt done dinner. And indeed there is only us two at home. Johnny (this was her ſon) is gone to ſee his aunt, who is to take him to the fair; for the little young rogue is continually abroad with her on-

holidays. Mary (the maid) is gone to a couſin's wedding; I told her ſhe might go if ſhe would, for weddings don't happen every day, and ſhe will be a good while before ſhe comes back. On the other hand, Toinon is gone to ſee her mother, the poor woman don't ſee her often, ſhe lives as far as, Oh dear, I can't think of the name of the place; well, I ſhall think on it by and by. And ſo as I was ſaying, you muſt think how ſhe muſt trot and run to get thither and back again to-night, and ſo much the better; I am glad on it, it makes her ſtay at home. And ſo I was alone waiting for Marianne, who happened to fall as ſhe came from church and hurt her foot, ſo that ſhe could not walk, and ſo they carried her into a houſe to look at her foot, and to have a ſurgeon, who, you know could not come in a moment; he muſt be ſent for, let it be ever ſo far; and then ſhe muſt have her ſtocking off and put on again; then ſhe muſt reſt herſelf, and a coach be called; and at laſt ſhe came home, after ſhe had made me ſtay till half an hour paſt one? Now you'd think we might go to dinner. No, there was the ugly coachman, that I had a mind to pay myſelf to ſave Marianne's money, who don't know how to manage; but ſhe, in ſpite of all I could do, was ſuch a fool as to give the coachman twice as much as his fare. I was in ſuch a paſſion I could have beat the rogue, if I had been ſtrong enough.

THERE has been noiſe enough then, ſaid Mr. de Climal. Yes, Sir, replied ſhe, if you pleaſe to call it ſo; I was in a heat indeed, but there was no harm done, only a mob gathered about the door. So much the worſe, ſaid he, gravely, ſuch ſcenes ought to be carefully avoided; and Marianne was in the right to pay him what he aſked. How does your foot do? added he, addreſſing himſelf

ſelf to me. Pretty well, Sir, ſaid *I*, *I* feel hardly any pain; it is weak indeed, but I hope to-morrow it will be perfectly well again. Have you done dinner, ſaid he to us? Oh, Sir, yes, to be ſure, replied Mrs. du Tour, we were ſat talking of one thing or other. Won't you pleaſe to ſit down, Sir, have you any thing to ſay to Marianne? Yes, ſaid he, I want to ſpeak to her.——Well, be ſo good as to walk into the parlour, returned ſhe; this is a naſty hole, every thing is in a litter: come Marianne, lean upon me; hold I'll wait upon you in a minute.——Stay, ſtay, I'll fetch my ell, which may make a ſhift to do. No, no, ſaid Mr. de Climal, I will help her, here take hold of my arm, Miſs. Upon this I got up and went with him through the ſhop into the parlour.

Well, ſaid Mrs. du Tour, as I was ſeating myſelf in an elbow-chair; ſince you are engaged with Marianne, I'll ſlip on my hood, and go to church to hear a little of the prayers: it is pretty late, but I ſhall not loſe all, I ſhall hear more or leſs of them. Sir, you'll excuſe my going. I leave you to look after the houſe, Marianne, if any body aſks for me, tell them I ſhall not be long: Do you hear, child? Sir, your ſervant. Upon this ſhe left us: and went out a moment after, only pulling the door after her, but not ſhutting it, becauſe no body could come into the ſhop without our ſeeing them from the parlour.

Till this time Mr. de Climal appeared gloomy and reſerved; he had hardly ſpoke four words, and ſeemed to wait till ſhe was gone before he would begin the converſation. For my part, I gueſſed by his thoughtful intriguing air, what imployed his mind; and was, before he began, diſguſted with the perſecution I was like to undergo of hearing him urge his hateful paſſion. For you remember

that before my adventure with Valville, I had decided within myſelf, that his pretended affection was only an amorous inclination, inconſiſtent with honour, and that ſtrict religion he made profeſſion of; but what paſſed at his nephew's put it beyond all doubt. A good man would never have bluſhed at ſeeing me there; would never have diſſembled his knowing me, nor have appeared ſo confuſed and perplexed. No, his conſcience was wounded, and he dreaded a diſcovery of his guilty deſign. This was indeed a bluſhing before the ſin, or rather before it appeared viſible. And while I viewed him in this light, you can't imagine how deformed his vice made him appear, and what an inſupportable burthen his company was to me. Three days before, when I diſcovered that he loved me, I only conſidered him as an hypocrite, whom I muſt ſuffer to act as he pleaſed, ſince I was reſolved to render all his attempts upon my virtue abortive: But at preſent my thoughts were changed, I could not regard him with that tranquil indifference. His deteſted ſentiments raiſed in my heart an indignation againſt his perſon. In a word, I regarded him with other eyes: the tenderneſs of the nephew, who was young, amiable, and gallant, had taught me to look upon the uncle in a true light; I took notice of his age, his wrinkles, and above all the uglineſs of his character. What a fooliſh and ridiculous figure, thought I, has he been obliged to make at Valville's? how will he introduce his deteſted love, ſo offenſive to Virtue? Will he exhort me to be no better than himſelf; and to renounce all my hopes, my rapturous hopes of a happy futurity, in return for the ſervices he hath done me! Oh, how odious he is! How can a man of his age hide from himſelf his own villany, which ought to fill him with horror! To be hoary with age, which

naturally ſhould inſpire reverence; to have an air of ſanctity and the character of a good chriſtian, and yet notwithſtanding all this, with a hardened front to tell a girl in private: Take no notice of this appearance of ſagacity and merit, I am a cheat; I deceive every body: I love you with the guilt and madneſs of a ſhameleſs debauchee: and beg you would oblige me ſo far as to turn a libertine to pleaſe me. Was not this a moſt engaging lover? Theſe were the ideas that paſſed through my mind during the ſilence which Mrs. du Tour's preſence occaſioned.

At laſt we were left alone. What an everlaſting talker is this! cried he, ſhrugging up his ſhoulders; I thought ſhe would never have done ſtunning us with her clack. Yes, anſwered I, ſhe loves too well to hear herſelf ſpeak; and beſides, ſhe, perhaps, can't imagine, that you can have any thing to ſay to me, that you would ſcruple to ſay before her. ——What think you of our meeting at my nephew's? reſumed he ſighing. Nothing, ſaid I, but that it was an accident. ——You acted very prudently, to pretend not to know me, ſaid he. It was becauſe you ſeemed to wiſh I ſhould do ſo, anſwered I. But, Sir, why are you glad I did not call you by your name; and what was the reaſon why you pretended you had never ſeen me before? I always thought a perſon of your character was never afraid of having his actions examined, and that conſcious of your own uprightneſs, you ſcorned to do any thing in the dark, that you were aſhamed to own in open day-light, and in the face of all the world.

Why, ſaid he, with an inſinuating and wheedling tone, it is much more proper both upon your account and mine, that they ſhould be ignorant of the engagments that are between us, which will not

be ſoon over; and we ſhould be very much to blame to give them an opportunity of criticiſing upon it; for, my dear child, thou art ſo very charming, that they could not help thinking I loved thee.——Piſh! Sir, they could never think of any ſuch thing, returned I, with an ingenuous freedom; they know you are a man of unblemiſhed honeſty.——Yes, yes, ſaid he merrily, they know it, and have reaſon to think ſo; but Marianne, one is not leſs honeſt for loving a pretty girl—— When I ſaid honeſt, returned I, with a ſerious air, I meant a good, a pious, and religious man; one who is above being a ſlave to vice, and has learnt to ſet bounds to his paſſions; in a word, one who delights to diffuſe happineſs around him, who reveres himſelf, and loves his God.——This, Sir, I have been taught is the character of every good man; at leaſt, it is a height of virtue that he ardently aſpires after; but how is this conſiſtent with a vicious——

Hold, my dear child, interrupted he, you don't take me for a ſaint I hope? I would not have you view me in this light: you do me too much honour, I aſſure you; indeed I don't deſerve it. However, it would be very difficult for a ſaint to continue ſo with you. Ay, difficult indeed! judge then how impoſſible it is for others. I have never a wife, to whom I owe my affections: I have not been able to reſiſt the powerful force of ſo many united charms; ——but we will talk of this by and by. Let us return to your accident. You fell down, and was carried to my nephew's, who is a giddy young fellow, and, no doubt, ſaid many gallant things to you; did not he? he was entertaining you, I fancy, with all the fine things he could ſay, when the lady and I entered; but there is nothing ſurprizing in that; he found you what you are, divinely charming,

charming, and beautiful as an angel; in ſhort, what every body elſe muſt think of you: but as I am certainly the beſt friend you have in the world (and this I hope, I ſhall be always able to give you convincing proofs of) tell me, my charmer, did not you delight to hear him? methought you ſeemed to liſten with an air of ſatisfaction: am I deceived? Sir, anſwered I vexed and confuſed, I heard him, becauſe I was with him: I could not poſſibly do otherwiſe; but he ſaid nothing to me but what was conſiſtent with the greateſt politeneſs and the moſt perfect virtue. Perfect virtue! cried he, repeating my words, Take care, Marianne; this may proceed from ſome prejudice in his favour. Alas! how much I ſhould pity you, if in your preſent ſituation, you ſhould be tempted to liſten to his deluſive arts, and be cajoled into your ruin! how irreparable would be the loſs! and what would become of you, do you think? But, tell me, did he aſk you where you lived? Yes, Sir, I believe he did, anſwered I, bluſhing. And you, not knowing the conſequence, have, without doubt, told him; added he. To what purpoſe would it have been to have concealed it from him, returned I, ſince I could not get into a hackney-coach, without giving orders where to drive me. You make me tremble for you, cried he, with a ſerious and compaſſionate air; yes, I ſhudder at the thought of this unhappy event, which may be attended with the moſt fatal conſequences, if your prudence don't prevent them: Indeed, child, he would ruin you; it is but too true, and I can't help telling you ſo. Alas! what a pity it is, that thus poſſeſſed of all the various charms and graces that adorn your whole ſex, you ſhould become the prey of a young rake who does not love you; for do theſe thoughtleſs

coxcombs

coxcombs know what it is to love? have they a heart? have they any ſolid ſentiments? have they honour or a character to ſupport? No, no, his higheſt ambition is to gratify his vicious deſires, and then to abandon you to deſpair and miſery. My nephew will regard you as one much beneath him; he will look upon you as a pretty girl, whom he condeſcends to make a kind miſtreſs of; and whom his vanity at once prompts him to believe, is ready to run mad for him. He will at firſt amuſe you by a paſſionate behaviour, and a few trifling preſents: he will make the moſt tender proteſtations, which you will too eaſily believe; he will delude you by an appearance of the moſt ardent affection; he will be inceſſantly praiſing your too lovely perſon, and by pretending to adore you, inſinuate himſelf into your affections; in ſhort, he will propoſe ſome little aſſignations, which you will at firſt refuſe him, but at laſt conſent to; and then you will find, that as ſoon as you have ſurrendered up to him the poſſeſſion of your heart, inconſtancy and diſguſt will ſucceed, and he will boaſt of having made a conqueſt of your virtue, and deſpiſe the ſacrifice. This is the natural behaviour of a young man: and thus you will infallibly find it, if you liſten to his pretended paſſion. And would this be agreeable to you? pray conſider what would become of you if this ſhould ever be your caſe? You have wit and good ſenſe, and, therefore, cannot avoid looking into your circumſtances, and ſeeing what muſt be the conſequence of your giving him encouragement; and being terrified at the frightful apprehenſions that muſt frequently diſquiet your mind. You know, Marianne, you are an orphan, an orphan unknown to all the world, related to no perſon upon earth; you know none that will ſhare in your affliction, and ſigh with

you

you in your miſery: without parents, without fortune, without one friend, me only excepted, whom you have only known by chance; I am the only perſon that intereſts himſelf in your affairs and am indeed tenderly attached to you, as you ſee by my manner of ſpeaking to you: and will have infinitely more reaſon to think ſo by my future actions: for I am rich; this I ſay by the by, and am able, on that account, to ſupport you in a manner proportionable to my affection, provided you know your true intereſt, and I have reaſon to approve your conduct. By conduct, I mean prudence, and not a certain auſterity of manners, not a rigid and ſevere life, which it may be difficult, and perhaps impoſſible, for you to lead: for you are not in a ſituation to be ſcrupulouſly nice in this particular; beſides, mere morality cannot ſave you; it is a low and deſpicable attainment. No: what you want in this you muſt make up in ſtrong confidence and preſumption; for implicit faith and ſound orthodoxy are a ſure guide——Hold! interrupted I, I am at a loſs to comprehend what you mean. In what muſt not I be ſcrupulouſly nice? and what means that cenſure of morality? Is it not all that is good, all that is amiable, truly noble and great in man; all that makes the deity lovely, adorable, and worthy our higheſt regards? I am ſure I always thought morality the brighteſt attribute of the divinity.——Piſh, don't preach, reſumed he, pray obſerve I ſpeak to you as a man who underſtands the world, who knows you muſt live, and that neceſſity is a terrible thing. And therefore, was going to ſay, that tho' I may appear to you as an enemy to what you call love, I confeſs I am not ſo to all kinds of engagements. I don't ſay you muſt fly from them entirely, they may be uſeful and reaſonable, as well as ruinous and fatal; as

that

that muſt be which you might have for my nephew, ſince it could have no other end but to deprive you of the benefit of all the advantages you are poſſeſſed of, which is the being amiable. You would perhaps find ſome pleaſure and ſatisfaction in loving a giddy young rake with tenderneſs and fidelity; but it would be a pleaſure big with unhappineſs, ſince the fooliſh libertine would not love you in return, and from the firſt day, would leave you in indigence, and in a miſery, from which you would find it extremely difficult to extricate yourſelf. Miſery indeed! I cannot ſoften the expreſſion, ſince it is my buſineſs to open your eyes and not to dry up your tears. This ſubject, my dear Marianne, has employed my thoughts ever ſince I left you, and has made me ſo ſoon leave the company where I dined: for I have a great many things to tell you, and am in a very good diſpoſition, as you without doubt have taken notice of.

YES, Sir, (anſwered I, with the tears ſtreaming from my eyes, and my breaſt filled with confuſion and vexation at the dreadful picture he had drawn of my condition, as well as abhorrence of that ſelfiſh, deteſtable motive, that had induced him to uſe me thus.) Yes, Sir, ſpeak freely, I ſhall always think it my duty to follow the advice of ſo pious a man as you. Let my piety alone, ſaid he, approaching me with a free air, to take hold of my hand, I have already told you what diſpoſition I am in. I throw religion aſide, I am not preaching to you, my dear: I would only appear to you as a man of ſenſe, who knows you have nothing, and muſt be provided with all the neceſſaries of life, unleſs you are determined to go to ſervice; and this you ſeem to have an averſion to; and indeed it is not at all fit for you. No, anſwered I, bluſhing with anger, I hope I ſhall never

ver be obliged to come to that extremity. This would be a ſad reſource, rejoined he, I can't even think of it without feeling a very ſenſible uneaſineſs, for I love you, my dear child, moſt tenderly. I am perſuaded you do, Sir, and I depend upon your friendſhip, and that virtue which you profeſs, returned I, in order to deter him from explaining himſelf more clearly; but it was to no purpoſe. Ah! Marianne, returned he, I profeſs nothing but weakneſs; and to be perhaps even more weak than any other man. You know very well what I mean by friendſhip; but you are a little malicious creature, and are willing to divert yourſelf by pretending not to underſtand me. Yes, I love you; you know it, and have for ſome time been ſenſible of it. I love you as ſuch a charming creature ſhould be loved. It is not friendſhip that you have inſpired. At firſt I thought it was only that, but I was deceived; it was love, the moſt tender love. Do you underſtand me now? My love will never change, and you ſhall have no longer room to complain of your adverſe fortune. For there is no friend comparable to ſuch a lover as I am.

You my lover! cried I, caſting down my eyes; You, Sir! I could not have thought it. Nor I neither, returned he, I was ſurprized, my dear, to find I had loſt my heart.——You were very unhappy; I had never ſeen any body who had ſo much reaſon to be afflicted, or more worthy of ſuccour: I was born with a heart ſenſible of the misfortunes of others; and in rendering you my aſſiſtance, I only thought of being generous, of indulging my compaſſion, or piety, if you pleaſe, ſince you are willing to look on it in that light. I looked on your diſtreſs with the heart of a friend, till your charms melted the mind, that your misfortunes had rendered ſoft and too ſuſceptible of tender impreſſions; and

and while I felt the growing paſſion ſwell my heart, I called it by a name leſs ſoft, and leſs liable to alarm me. Thus I have deceived myſelf, and have been puniſhed as my preſumption deſerved; I therefore don't pretend to excuſe myſelf, but own I am very much to blame: I ought to have ſecured myſelf againſt this weakneſs: for I ſhould have been leſs guilty had I feared you; had I fled from you, and deſerted you in this miſerable diſtreſs; but on the other hand, if I had been ſo prudent, what would have become of you, Marianne? poor child, to what frightful extremities wouldſt thou have been reduced! ſee how my weakneſs, or my love, call it which you pleaſe, came ſeaſonably to your relief. Don't you think, my dear, there is a providence in it, which has permitted me to love, and you to be extricated from your embarraſſed and dreadful circumſtances at my expence: for if I had taken care of myſelf, you would have had no proviſion, no retreat to fly to: and this reflection conſoles me, becauſe it juſtifies to myſelf the impetuoſity of my paſſion, and makes it neceſſary, though at the ſame time it humbles me. It is a little evil, attended with a great, with an infinite good. I have here only mentioned the diſtraction you would be in by my nephew, or any other young man's abandoning you, without ſaying any thing of the reproach which muſt follow. There are few men, eſpecially young ones, who mind ſuch a girl as you; they boaſt and glory in the ſucceſs of their amours, and with an impudent mockery point out the poor deſerted wretch to their companions, who creeps along oppreſt and almoſt ſunk down with miſery, and cry with an inſolent look, "There ſhe is." Oh! my dear charmer, judge what an adventure this would be to you, who are the moſt lovely perſon of your ſex, and would, therefore,

be

be the moſt diſhonoured; for in theſe caſes, the faireſt are moſt deſpiſed; becauſe it muſt coſt them ſome pains to bring themſelves to look upon them as deſpicable. But you would run no hazard with me. You know my character, and are ſenſible that your reputation would be ſecure under my protection: I ſhall not be deſirous that other people ſhould know I love you; nor that you return my affection. It is in private that I ſhall receive you; and without noiſe ſecure to you a fortune that may for ever free you from the neceſſity of depending upon others, who have not ſuch generous ſentiments. People, whether of better or inferior circumſtances, are generally covetous: They are amorous without tenderneſs, and would only give you a preſent and ſcanty ſupply, ſo that the ſame neceſſity would always oblige you to ſuffer their pretended love.

I COULD not hear this diſcourſe without being ſeized with the moſt piercing grief; I found myſelf worthy of the greateſt compaſſion, in being obliged to hear his ſhocking inſolence; and burſting into a flood of tears, I cried out, Good God! to what am I reduced! He was immediately ſenſible that this exclamation proceeded from the fear and terror with which he had filled my mind. Softly, ſoftly, cried he, with a whining tone, and taking hold of my hand; huſh, ſoftly, my dear charming girl, take courage, ſince you have been ſo happy as to pleaſe me, you are out of all the danger I have mentioned: it is true, without me you could not avoid it; for I muſt not flatter you; you are not born to be a linnen-draper, no, this will never ſupport you: I am ſure you muſt be ſenſible of that; and ſuppoſing you had made yourſelf a miſtreſs of the trade, how would you raiſe money to ſet up; you muſt be for ever a ſhop-maid without having the leaſt glimmering hope of ever improving

proving your circumſtance. Amiable as you are, you ſtill want many of the neceſſaries and conveniencies of life; but how will you obtain them, unleſs you conſent that theſe perſons ſhould help you, and if you do conſent, how unhappy will be your ſituation! Oh! Sir, ſaid I, with a deep ſigh, entertain me no more with theſe diſagreeable ſubjects; have ſome conſideration for me, and pity my youth. You know that I am but juſt out of the hands of a virtuous lady; whom I am reſolved it ſhall be my ſtudy to imitate: from her and her brother I have received an education, that makes ſuch diſcourſes quite unintelligible to me; and I am ſurprized to ſee it poſſible that a man of your appearance can be capable of uſing me in this manner, for no other reaſon but becauſe I am poor. No, my child, returned he, ſqueezing my hand; no, you are not; you have riches, ſince I have them, it is I that am to be henceforward to you a parent, in the room of thoſe you have never known. Compoſe yourſelf I beſeech you; notwithſtanding what I have ſaid, I am not willing to give you the leaſt degree of uſeleſs fear; but to ſhew you of what conſequence it is that we ſhould get acquainted, and that I ſhould have taken, without my perceiving it, the moſt tender inclination, which attaches me to you, and makes our intereſts inſeparable. It is an inclination that humbles me, but which I chearfully ſubmit to; becauſe it is the effect of an event every way ſurprizing. Yes, the end of your misfortunes depends on this affection. I ſhould not have given you a ſufficient ſupport had I been leſs yours. I ſhould have behaved as a good man ought on ſuch occaſions; but that would not have been ſufficient; your wants required me to do ſomething more; it was neceſſary that I ſhould love you; and I do love you moſt paſſionately;

it is therefore my duty to attone for my weakneſs, and expiate my guilt, by removing all the inconveniences of your preſent condition. This is what I have reſolved upon, my dear, and I hope you will not oppoſe it; for I flatter myſelf you do not know how to be ungrateful. I confeſs there is a good deal of difference between your age and mine; but in fact, I am only old by compariſon, that is, becauſe you are very young; for with any other perſon I ſhould be thought pretty tollerable, added he, with the tone of a perſon ſenſible of his good conſtitution. But, let us ſee, we ought to take our meaſures, and fix upon ſomething before Mrs. du Tour comes home. I believe you think no more of being a linnen-draper. On the other hand there is Valville, a rakiſh young fellow, you have told him where you live; and he will infallibly ſeek an opportunity to ſee you again. We ought then to eſcape his purſuit, and to hide from him our engagements, which we ſhall not be long able to conceal if you ſtay with this woman. The only method therefore we can take is to remove to-morrow to the other end of the town, which will not be at all difficult. I know an honeſt man, who has the management of my affairs, he is what they call a ſolicitor; His wife is a ſenſible woman; and they keep a very pretty little houſe, and have an apartment which has been let to a gentleman of Provence, who has juſt left it, and this apartment I will go to-night and beſpeak for you. You will be agreeably ſituated, and on my account extremely well uſed. Theſe good people will be charmed to have you there, and think themſelves highly honoured, becauſe you will appear genteel, and in ſuch a manner as to gain reſpect. You ſhall arrive there under the character of one of my relations, who has neither father nor mother, whom I have

brought

brought out of the country, in order to take care of; this joined to a handſome ſum, I will pay for your board, the ſtock of rich clothes, and the noble furniture you ſhall have in two days, together with the maſters I ſhall provide for you, ſuch as a dancing, ſinging, and muſic maſter, or what others you pleaſe; to which I may add the manner I ſhall behave towards you, when I pay you a viſit; all theſe, I ſay, will effectually ſecure their eſteem and render you miſtreſs over them. Is not this true? There is not time for heſitation. You muſt make haſte, Marianne; and in order to prepare Mrs. du Tour for your departure, tell her to-night, that you find yourſelf unfit for her buſineſs, and that you will go into a convent to-morrow morning; upon which I will ſend the man's wife we have been ſpeaking of in a coach, to carry you to her houſe, where you will find me. Tell me now, do not you agree to this? To encourage you, and to prove the ſincerity of my intentions (for I do not deſire you ſhould rely intirely upon my word) I will bring you to-morrow a ſmall contract of five or ſix thouſand livres a year, which will be a ſupply till ſomething better can be thought of. Speak my dear lovely girl, won't you be ready to-morrow? Shall they come for you? Yes, yes, you conſent, don't you?

At firſt I could make no anſwer; ſuch an open indignity confounded me, filled me with amazement, and took from me the uſe of ſpeech, and I remained immoveable with eyes caſt down and bathed in tears. What do you reſolve then, my dear Marianne? continued he, after a moment's pauſe; the time preſſes us to make haſte: du Tour will be here preſently. Is it agreed? ſhall I ſpeak to the man to-night? At theſe words, coming to myſelf, Oh! Sir, cried I, you are not then known

the

the monk who brought me to you was deceived; he told me you was a man ſo honeſt!——Here my tears and ſighs choaked my words, and prevented my ſaying any more. My dear child! returned he, what falſe ideas do you conceive of things! Alas! if he himſelf was ſenſible of the violence of my paſſion, he would not expreſs ſuch ſurprize, nor would he eſteem me the leſs for it. He would tell you, that theſe are involuntary effects, which may happen to the moſt honeſt and moſt pious men: He would tell you, that, all goodneſs as he is, he durſt not ſwear to preſerve himſelf free; and that there is no fault ſo pardonable, as a ſenſibility like mine. Don't thus make a monſter of me, added he, bending one of his knees imperceptibly before me. Don't believe my heart leſs true, leſs worthy of your confidence, becauſe it is tender. This does not affect my probity, as I ſaid before, it is a weakneſs, but not a crime, and a weakneſs too, to which the beſt hearts are the moſt ſubject; as your own experience muſt have informed you. This monk, you ſay, thought he preſented you to a virtuous man, this I have been hitherto; this I am ſtill; and if I was leſs ſo, I ſhould not love you perhaps at all. It is your misfortunes and my virtues that have united their force, and inſpired me with my preſent reſolutions: I would be generous; I would indulge my pity for you, and therefore I ſuffer myſelf to love; to love you who reproach me for it: you whom others will love, but not like me: you, who would make them a return, though your fortune be a loſer; and you who repulſe me, your beſt, nay, only friend, who am going to extricate you from all the anxious diſtracting cares, and all that reproach which threatens your days; and me whom heaven, which diſpoſes of all things to ſubſerve its wiſe purpoſes, is making

uſe

of to change your condition from want and miſery to plenty and happineſs.

He had no ſooner ſaid theſe words but heaven, whom he preſumed to make an accomplice in his guilt, ſeemed to puniſh him by the ſudden arrival of Valville, who, as I have already ſaid, knew Mrs. du Tour. He came through the ſhop to the parlour, where he found my old gallant in the ſame poſture, in which two or three hours before he had been ſurprized by Mr. de Climal; that is, on his knee before me, with my hand in his, which he was kiſſing; and which I endeavoured to ſnatch from him. In a word, a revenge could not have been more compleat. I was the firſt that perceived Valville, when a geſture of ſurprize and aſtoniſhment, made Mr. de Climal turn his head and ſee him too. But judge how he was ſtruck at the ſight. He ſeemed turned to ſtone: his mouth was open as if fixed: he remained on his knee, without motion, without preſence of mind, without the uſe of ſpeech. Never did a confounded and abaſhed hypocrite make leſs myſtery of his ſhame, or more plainly diſcover his guilt. None could have behaved with a worſe grace under the weight of his iniquity, or confeſs more frankly his own baſeneſs. But it is in vain I attempt to deſcribe him; ſince I cannot give you a picture that comes up to the original. For my part, as I had nothing to reproach myſelf with, I appeared more ſurprized than confuſed at this event; and was going to ſpeak, when Valville, who at firſt caſt a look full of diſdain at me, and then cooly contemplated his uncle's diſorder, ſaid with an air of tranquility and contempt; This is mighty pretty, Madam! Your ſervant, Sir, I beg pardon for my intruſion; and then left us, caſting another glance at me, more contemptuous than the former; when Mr. de Climal roſe up. What

do

do you mean, Sir; what is very pretty, cried I, riſing with precipitation: Stop, Sir, ſtop; you are miſtaken——you wrong me——you don't do me juſtice. But my cries were in vain, ſince he did not return. Run after him, Sir, ſaid I then to his uncle; whoſe heart ſeemed ſtill to be in a violent palpitation, and who was, with a trembling hand, pulling his cloak over his ſhoulders; run, Sir, would you have me made the victim of his ſcorn? What will he think of me? What will he take me for? Lord, how unhappy am I? This I ſaid with the tears in my eyes, and ſo diſtracted were my thoughts, that I was going myſelf to call Valville back, who was already in the ſtreet: But his uncle ſtopped me: What are you going to do, cried he? Stay, Miſs, don't diſturb yourſelf; I know what turn to give this affair: beſides, what need you care what ſuch a fool thinks of you, ſince you may if you pleaſe never ſee him any more. How! What need I care, replied I, in a rage! not care! don't he know Mrs. du Tour? and won't he freely tell her his thoughts? Have not I had a converſation with him for above an hour? And won't he know me again whenever he ſees me? May he not meet me every day; perhaps to-morrow? Will he not deſpiſe me? Will he not regard me as a loſt, abandoned and unworthy creature, purely on your account? Me who have ſtill retained the virtue which he imagines I have loſt! who had rather loſe my life than my innocence! and have nothing that I can call my own, but my honeſty, and the ſecret ſatisfaction of not having deſerved ſuch reproach! No, Sir, I have reaſon to be afflicted, and in the utmoſt grief, that ever I knew you: It was the greateſt misfortune that could happen to me. Let me go——I will, I am

reſolved, ſpeak to your nephew, and let him know my innocence. It is not juſt that you ſhould ſecure your reputation by the loſs of mine. Why do you counterfeit the pious man if you are not ſo. It is hard that I muſt be made a tool to ſupport your hypocriſies.

You little ungrateful creature, replied he, turning pale; is it thus you repay my kindneſs? What do you mean by your innocence? where did you dream that I ever thought of attacking it. On the contrary, you have heard me ſay, that though I had an inclination for you, I reproached myſelf and was ſorry for it; that it filled me with humility; that I looked upon it as a fault, for which I was ſelf-condemned; and which I was ready to atone for, by turning it entirely to your advantage, without expecting any thing from you in return but your grateful acknowledgements. Were not theſe my very expreſſions; and is there any thing in all this, that ought to render me ſuſpected of a crime, which my very ſoul abhors? Tis monſtrous thus to blemiſh the purity of my honeſt intentions. Well, Sir, ſaid I, ſince theſe were your deſigns, and you have ſtill ſo much virtue, and are, indeed, the upright man you profeſs to be; don't permit me to loſe my reputation through an accident, which you alone was the cauſe of. Lead me to your nephew, take me to him directly; undeceive him, and ſave your honour as well as mine. You held my hand faſt in your's, and I believe, was even kiſſing it, in ſpight of my endeavours to draw it back. You were at my feet, and can you think he could take this for a proof of your piety and compaſſion? will he not rather imagine you are my lover, and that I am your miſtreſs? At leaſt ought you not to give your ſelf the trouble to undeceive him?

him? You ought certainly to ſpeak to him, and let him know my innocence; you are obliged to do it, out of regard to my character, and to prevent ſcandal; nor can you be ſilent without being highly guilty in the ſight of that being who is truth and goodneſs itſelf. Do this, Sir, and then you will find I ſhall have the moſt grateful heart in the world, that no body will reſpect you more: I ſhall be entirely at your devotion, and ſhall give you all the affection of a child; all the confidence and regard that is due to one, who will ſo juſtly deſerve the dear name of a friend. And if, after this, you will not abandon me, expect from me all that a modeſt and inflexible virtue may innocently grant. Would you gain my eſteem and reverence, and my moſt dutiful and affectionate regard, delay not a moment, but carry me immediately to Valville, and at once ſave your reputation and mine. Tell your nephew that he ought not to entertain an ill opinion of me; let him know that I am a poor orphan, and that upon this account you have taken me into your care, in order to fill up the loſs of my neareſt relations by being yourſelf a father to me; and that your unwillingneſs to ſeem to know me was only intended to conceal this remarkable act of charity. Say but this, and let your conduct ſhew that you are in earneſt, and I will go with you wherever you will. If theſe are your diſpoſitions, you will the eaſier pardon all I have ſaid, ſince it proceeded not from ingratitude, which will ever be a ſtranger to my breaſt, but from a thoughtleſs ſudden tranſport, occaſioned by the fear of my good name's being loſt and my virtue in danger; that virtue which has been my only ſupport in my afflictions. Do this, I ſay, and I will atone for all I have ſaid by the moſt

humble ſubmiſſions: We have nothing to do but to ſtay till Mrs. du Tour returns home before we go; but if you will not conſent to it, I declare I will go by myſelf.

GET you gone, you little ſaucy huzzy, (returned he, like a man who had loſt all ſenſe of ſhame, and no longer valued my eſteem, ſince he was willing I ſhould deſpiſe him as he deſerved:) Get you gone:——I don't fear you:——do your worſt:——you are not able to throw an odium upon my character: but, do you hear? I adviſe you to take care what you ſay; or I'll make you know what it is to affront me. I'll ſay no more: you ſhall know how much is ſometimes loſt by daring to ſay too much. Farewel, depend no more upon my friendſhip: I withdraw my charity: there are other perſons in diſtreſs more worthy of pity, and to whom it is juſt I ſhould give the preference. You will ſtill have ſomething to make you remember me. You may keep the clothes, linnen, and money, I have given you, tho' indeed you don't deſerve them. No, Sir, ſaid I, or rather cried I to him, I won't keep any of them: you ſhall have them all again: and firſt, I begin with your money, which I have happily about me: there it is, (added I, throwing it on the table in a haſty contemptuous manner, which well expreſſed the emotions of a young heart, at the ſame time proud, virtuous, and inſolent;) now there only remains the cloaths and linnen, which I ſhall preſently bundle up for you to take with you in your coach, Sir; and as I have ſome of your clothes on, for which I have as great a horror as I have for you; I only deſire time to go into my chamber and undreſs me, and I ſhall be with you preſently; and pray ſtay for

for them, or, I give you my word, I will throw them out of the window.

You muſt obſerve, that whilſt I was talking in this manner, I was unpinning my cloaths, and had preſently pulled off my cap, becauſe I no longer looked upon it as mine, ſo that in a moment I ſtood bare-headed before him, with my hair diſhevelled. This ſight entirely diſconcerted him: I was in a ſtrange tranſport, regardleſs of every thing; I raiſed my voice, and there was nothing to be ſeen but diſorder, confuſion, and a wild indecorum which alarmed him; and which he ſeemed to apprehend was in danger of degenerating into an inſult upon him. I inſiſted upon going into my room to pack up my clothes: he held me faſt, and would not let me go on account of my paſſion; his lips pale and trembling began to open, but what he ſaid I could not perfectly hear; for he ſpoke with a confuſion, that made him incapable of expreſſing himſelf intelligibly. At laſt he ſtammered out. But, Marianne——— are you mad?——Why all this noiſe?——— huſh, how fooliſh you make yourſelf.——Come, be quiet——take care——huſh, Mrs. du Tour will come preſently.

At this moment ſhe entered. Hey day! cried ſhe, ſeeing me in this diſorder, what is the matter now? Is the girl bewitched! What have you done with your cap? Mercy on me! it is on the ground, I think. Bleſs my heart! has any body been beating her?——These queſtions ſhe aſked all in a breath, and with ten times more noiſe than we both made before. No, no, ſaid Mr. de Climal, who made haſte to anſwer her for fear I ſhould begin firſt, I will tell you what is the matter. It is nothing but a miſunderſtanding of her's that provoked me, for which I ſhall put

a ſtop to my favours. I will pay you for the little time ſhe has been with you; but I ſhan't be anſwerable for the time ſhe ſhall ſtay after to-day. What! ſaid Mrs. du Tour, with an air of inquietude, won't you continue to pay for the poor wretch's board: How do you think I muſt keep her then? Pray, Madam, don't make yourſelf uneaſy about that: I ſhall not be at your expence; and God forbid I ſhould ever more be at his, ſaid I in my turn, ſitting down in an elbow-chair, without knowing what I did, and where I gave way to my grief regardleſs of either of them. As for him, he ſtole away while I was ſpeaking, and I remained only with Mrs. du Tour, who ſeemed quite aſtoniſhed, and holding up her hands, What a rout is here, cried ſhe, ſitting down! You have made a fine piece of work on it, Marianne, have not ye? No more money, no more proviſion! no more maintenance! Now are you ſatisfied, ha? What a pretty ſtep you have taken! Ay, ay, cry now, cry, do: you may have your belly full of it: at laſt you are turned out of doors. What a fooliſh wench you are.——Oh, let me alone, Madam, let me alone, I intreat you, ſaid I, you talk without knowing any thing of the matter. Not know any thing of the matter, returned ſhe, that is pretty indeed! Don't I know you have nothing in the world? Is not that knowing enough of the matter? not know quotha! What does the girl mean by her knowing? Where will you go now?——It is this makes me uneaſy; for I ſpeak purely out of friendſhip for you; for were I in circumſtances to keep you, you would have no occaſion to mind the loſs of Mr. de Climal. Ads bobs! I would ſay, come, come, my girl, thou haſt nothing it is true: but I have more than I want; let him go if he will, never

mind

mind him. But, lack-a-day, what ſignifies good-nature alone. The times are bad, and proviſions are very dear, and one has enough to do to make both ends meet; and it is not without difficulty that we can do that.

BE eaſy, anſwered I, with a deep ſigh; I aſſure you I will go to-morrow, let what will follow. I am not without money, and will give you what you demand for the expence I ſhall be to you till I leave your houſe.

WHAT a pity it is, anſwered ſhe! O! but, Marianne, returned ſhe, quite ſoftened, how happened this ſad quarrel? I have already, you know, preached to you, and inſtructed you how to manage him; I am afraid you did not follow my directions. Don't mention him any more, ſaid I to her, he is an unworthy wretch. He would have me leave your houſe, and lodge at a great diſtance from hence with one of his acquaintance, who probably is no better than himſelf; and whoſe wife was to have taken me away to-morrow morning. So, Madam, if I had not broke with him, but ſeemed to conſent to every thing he ſaid, as you adviſed me, I ſhould not have ſtaid longer with you.

HAH, hah! cried ſhe, was that his intention? he wanted to take you from me to place you with ſome ſcrubs, I ſuppoſe. Re'lly that is mighty good! What a fuſty old fellow it is! what a dotard! with his up-lifted eyes and gloomy diſmal devotion! Would not one take him, at firſt ſight, to be only fit to be put in a niche for ſome ſaint; and yet I find he is as arrant a ſinner as the worſt of us.——But why did he want to remove you? Was it becauſe he could not ſee you here? who would have hindered him? was it not in his own power? he told me that he would take care of

you, which was a very good work. So much the better, ſaid I. Do we uſe to interfere in works of charity? No ſure.——None but God knows people's hearts, and he will have us always think the beſt of our neighbours. What ſhould he be afraid of? he might come and go when he pleaſed. And ſince he ſaid he was a good charitable man, was it my place to contradict him, and give him the lye. Had you not a room to yourſelf, and ſhould I have gone to have ſeen what you did there? What would he have had more? What maggot bit his old crown? Pray, what were his reaſons for deſiring you to change your lodging?

You muſt know returned I, with an air of negligence, that after my fall, I was carried to Mr. Valville's; and having told him where I lived, he fears he ſhould come to ſee me here. Oh, there is the ſtory then at laſt, replied ſhe; I ſee the reaſon perfectly, and don't at all wonder at his acting thus. It is becauſe he apprehends his piety will not paſs current with his nephew, who doubtleſs would one time or other have taken occaſion to aſk him what he intends to do with you. But, Marianne, continued ſhe, has the young gentleman been here? Yes, Madam, ſaid I, he is but juſt gone, without entering into any particulars; and it was after his departure, that Mr. de Climal ſhewed his reſentment at my refuſal to accompany him to-morrow to the new lodgings he had provided for me, and then reproached me as being guilty of the blackeſt ingratitude for daring to refuſe him, from whom I have received ſo many favours. For this reaſon I was reſolved to return all his preſents, even to the cap I had on; and this thought agitated me ſo much, that I put it off for that purpoſe that he might take it with him.

WHAT a ſtrange kind of rout is here about nothing! cried ſhe; you had ill luck indeed to fall juſt by Valville's houſe. Mercy on me! how came your foot to ſlip? you ſhould have taken care how you walked, Marianne? See now what it is to be giddy. But how came you to tell him where you lived? for it was that only that brought him hither. I did not give much attention to what ſhe ſaid; and anſwered her only out of complaiſance. She went on; in ſhort, child, I do not know how to direct you. I ſee no remedy, not I. Adviſe with yourſelf; for after what is paſt, you muſt make your choice and think of ſomething; the ſooner you come to a reſolution the better. I will have no buſtle in my houſe. Toinon and I both love peace. It is none of your fault, indeed; but no matter for that, people always put a bad conſtruction upon things: every body will pretend to be judges, though they know nothing of the matter. They all love to out with their nonſenſe: and then comes the tittle tattle, Who is he? and who is ſhe? and where? and how? and all that. You muſt needs think this cannot be very agreeable. Beſides, we are not related to you: if you were but a couſin, or ever ſo diſtant a relation you know, it were another thing; but you are neither a-kin to us, nor any body elſe. You afflict me ſenſibly, Madam, returned I briſkly: have I not already told you, I will go to-morrow; would you then have me go to-day? it ſhall be juſt as you pleaſe.

No, child, no, anſwered ſhe, do not miſtake me: I am not ſo unreaſonable. And if you knew how much I pity you, I am ſure you would not have any reaſon to complain of me. No, you ſhall lie here, and ſup with us to-night, if you'll take up with what we have in the houſe. I will not

have any thing for it: And if I can be of ſervice to you through my acquaintance, pray, child, do not ſpare me. But I muſt give you one piece of advice; and that is to ſell the gown your old lover gave you. You can't wear it with any face now; ſince you are poor, it is too good for you; and the linnen too is ſo fine that it cannot fail to make people aſk you where you had it. Believe me, beauty, poverty and finery don't look well together in one of your age. I would adviſe you to keep only the clothes you had when you came here; and ſell the reſt: I will buy them of you if you will; though I do not care much whether I do or no: but I have a mind to buy a new ſuit; and to oblige you, I will buy your gown for that purpoſe. I am a little fatter than you, but you are taller; and as it is very full, I ſhall manage that and eaſily make it ſerve. As to the linnen, I will either pay for it, or change it for other. But do as you pleaſe, I am very indifferent about it, and would not have it, if it was not to oblige you.

No, Madam, ſaid I coldly, I will ſell nothing; becauſe I have reſolved and even promiſed to ſend all to Mr. de Climal. To him! replied ſhe, you are a fool then, I would ſee him hanged firſt; give them him, quotha! I would as ſoon give them to old nick; he ſhould not ſee a rag of them any more. But you jeſt, ſure. Was it not an alms, and what is given this way, you know, child, can never be recalled.

She would not, very probably, have ſtopped here, tho' all ſhe could ſay would have been to no purpoſe, if ſhe had not been forced to it, by an old woman's coming in, who had ſome buſineſs with her. As ſoon as ſhe left me, I went up into our chamber; ours, I ſay, becauſe it was Toinon's as well as mine. As to my ſentiments with reſpect to

to Mr. de Climal, I ſhall mention them no more, My gratitude was all that ever bound me to him, which now he had wiped out. I deteſted him and looked upon him as a monſter; one ſo intirely indifferent to me, that I did not at all regret his being ſo. However, I pleaſed myſelf with the thoughts of returning his preſents, and never ſeeing him more.

Let us now come to what paſſed in my chamber. You imagine, I fancy, my firſt thoughts were taken up with the diſmal ſituation I was in, but you are miſtaken: this only regarded my life: but what engroſſed my whole attention was of greater conſequence, it was myſelf. You ſmile, Madam, and perhaps think I make a diſtinction, where reaſon and nature have made none; But indeed, I do not. Our lives are leſs dear to us than our paſſions. If we carefully obſerve what paſſes within us, we ſhall find that our lives are not neceſſary to our exiſtence; that it is in a manner only by accident that we live; but that to *be* is natural to us: thus for inſtance, when a man grown deſperate with the reflection of his miſery, murders himſelf; he only thinks of leaving life to diſengage himſelf from the cares of it; and it is not himſelf he is weary of, but only the burthen he bears. If I have lengthened my recital with this reflection, I have only done it to juſtify what I ſaid to you; that my thoughts were engaged upon a ſubject more important than life itſelf, and this was Valville. You remember that this gentleman when he ſurprized me with Mr. de Climal, cried out; This is mighty pretty, Madam! and you know too that I loved him: judge then how piercing was this ſhort reflection.

In the firſt place I had virtue; and while Valville thought ſo he was my lover. A lover, Madam,

Madam, that it was impoſſible to hate, even in circumſtances that ſeemed to require it. Perhaps he loves me no more, cried I! he has already gained a victory over his paſſions! Ah! how unworthy he is of my affection! but for what is he to blame? Is not de Climal rich and old, whilſt I am poor and deſtitute? has he not ſeen him at my feet, a moment after we had mutually pretended not to know each other? What opinion can he have of me after this dark and myſterious conduct? Then what have I to reproach him with? Though he loves me, can he help believing me guilty? Could he ſay leſs than he did? And is not he ſorry, that he has placed his affections upon an unworthy object, whom he is obliged to deſpiſe? Sure his diſdain is the ſtrongeſt proof of his own virtue: the ſtrongeſt proof that his intentions were honourable.——But does he actually deſpiſe me? Does he accuſe me of being guilty of every crime? Does he not heſitate a little to condemn me without hearing what I had to ſay in my own defence? and can I then excuſe ſuch a man? Ought I to ſee him again?——No; that would only declare my own weakneſs. Did he only ſuſpect me; did he only ſhow his reſentment, or ſeem but provoked; I might, I ought to have borne it. But to deſpiſe, to diſdain, and affront me! to go off abruptly, though I called him back, and beſought him to hear me! Oh! why ſhould I think of him any more? Why endeavour to juſtify myſelf to a man, who is ſo baſely deceived; deceived thro' his own precipitate folly, which would not permit him to ſtay to hear me vindicate my conduct. Ah! how little does he know me! let what will become of him! the uncle is gone; let the nephew follow! the one is a vile and unworthy wretch, and the other believes that I am ſo.

BUT I have a bundle to make up, continued I, riſing from a chair, where ſeated in a penſive poſture, I had made this ſhort ſoliloquy. But why do I amuſe myſelf thus? ſince I muſt go to-morrow I muſt ſend away theſe clothes to-day, as well as the money Mr. de Climal has given me.

I THEN opened my drawers to take out my new linnen. Yes, Valville, yes, continued I, drawing it out, you will ſoon know me better, and begin to think of me as you ought. This idea flattered me in ſuch a manner, that I gave way to the thought; and tho' in juſtice I ſhould chearfully have returned the clothes to Mr. de Climal, without any other motive; yet that of undeceiving this dear man, ſo took up my ſoul, that it ſeemed as if this conſideration had the greateſt ſhare. I will ſend, ſaid I, the linnen, the gown and the money, with a letter, to him; and this will not fail to diſabuſe him, and make him regret my loſs. He appeared to me to have a generous ſoul, I therefore applauded myſelf, and was extremely ſatisfied at the uneaſineſs I foreſaw I ſhould give him for having offended me: And I could not help flattering myſelf, that on many accounts I had a title to reſpect. Firſt, I had been very unhappy, and had ſomething ſingular in my adventures which demanded pity; and pity you know, Madam, is a friend to love. Then I was conſcious of my own virtue, and the artleſs innocence of a frank and open heart: this he would eaſily diſcover to my advantage; and beſides, I could not be ignorant that I was thought handſome and naturally genteel. What could I deſire more? Would not all this ſoften a generous lover, make him ſigh for having too raſhly ſuſpected me, and revenge my cauſe upon his own heart. I could not wiſh to ſucceed better than this;

this; and provided I afflicted Valville, and made him ſenſible how much he had wronged me, I ſhould have been content: and this done, I would never more ſpeak to him, nor give him an opportunity to ſee me. I found I loved him, and knew that he was ſenſible of it; and was even glad he was ſo; becauſe finding, that in ſpite of this, I had broke with him, he would eaſily ſee what ſhare he had in the affair.

In the mean time the bundle was forming; and what will doubtleſs make you ſmile, was, that in the midſt of theſe lofty and couragious thoughts, I could not help conſidering the linnen I was handling, and ſaying to myſelf (but very low, that I could ſcarce hear it) It is, however, well choſe, how white and fine it is! it is almoſt a pity to loſe it. This ſmall regret diſhonoured a little the nobleneſs of my ſurrender; but what would you have? I might have dreſſed myſelf in this linnen, which I was ſending away. Great actions are difficult, and what pleaſure ſoever we may take in them, we are apt ſometimes to be willing to diſpenſe with them, in order to taſte the pleaſure of enjoying our inclinations. To behave with a true greatneſs of mind requires ſome pain, we muſt do as thoſe who would appear tall, that is, ſtand upon the ſtretch; but we need only be as we are, to appear little. You ſee, Madam, I am a little ſevere upon myſelf. But to proceed.

There was now my cap to put up; and as I entered the room, I had laid it in a chair near the door, but had quite forgot what I had done with it. A girl of my age, who is going to loſe all her finery, may ſurely be allowed ſome little abſence of mind on ſo important an occaſion. Now I thought of nothing but my gown, which was next to be bundled up; and as I had it on, was, very likely, loth to pull it off; is there nothing

elſe left, ſaid I? is this all? no, there is the money; and this I took out of my pocket without the leaſt reluctance; for I was not covetous, only a little vain, and for this reaſon, parted with it with more courage than any of the reſt.

At laſt, however, there remained no more than my gown: What ſhall I do next? come, before I pull it off, let me take down the other, added I, which was, without doubt, only to gain time. I then went to take it; but in the ſmall ſpace there was between me and it, which was only two ſteps, my heart began to ſoften; my eyes, in a moment, grew full of tears, without my perceiving how they came ſo; I fetched a deep ſigh; which was either for myſelf, Valville, or my fine gown; I don't know which. But what is more certain, is, that taking my old one down, I ſighed again, ſat down in a chair, and cried out, Oh, how unhappy am I! Good God! why didſt thou take from me my father and mother?

Perhaps this is not what I would have ſaid, for it may be, I only ſpoke of my parents to render my affliction more commendable; for ſometimes we even diſſemble with ourſelves, and are guilty of weakneſſes, which we are willing to hide from our own hearts, by diſguiſing them under falſe names: ſo that it is not improbable, but that the loſs of my gaiety might draw theſe tears from me. However, after this ſhort ſoliloquy, which would doubtleſs have ended in my ſtripping myſelf of all theſe borrowed ornaments, I accidentally caſt my eyes upon my cap, that lay juſt by me. Well, cried I, I thought I had put every thing into the bundle, and there that cap lies ſtill: What have I been doing of? I have forgot to take a cap out of my drawers, and here I have ſtood all this while bare-headed! how anxious and perplexed am I!

what a troubleſome taſk have I upon my hands! and then paſſing inſenſibly from one idea to another, father St. Vincent came into my mind. Alas! poor man, ſaid I, how much will he be aſtoniſhed! What have I to tell him? I am reſolved I will go to ſee him, and there is no time to loſe. I ought to make haſte on account of my ſad ſituation; and refer ſending away the bundle till the next day. How ſilly am I to make myſelf uneaſy for theſe naſty cloaths. (I called them naſty, to perſuade myſelf I did not like them.) To-morrow morning will be a much better time than the preſent. Valville will be at home then; and it is very improbable he ſhould be there now. I will let the bundle alone for the preſent, and finiſh it by and by, when I ſhall return from viſiting the monk. My foot gives me very little pain, and I will take my time and go to the convent.

WELL, but what cap muſt I put on? What cap? why this that is juſt by me! it is too much trouble to open my drawers to look another, ſince I have this ready; and beſides, it is better than mine, and, therefore, it is even proper to put it on to undeceive the monk, who, on ſeeing how profuſe Mr. de Climal had been of his favours, would eaſily judge that it was not charity that induced him to be at ſuch expence; for I was reſolved to relate my whole adventure to him, ſince he appeared to me a very honeſt man; and this cap I imagined would confirm what I ſaid. But as for the gown I had on; what, ſaid I, muſt be done with that? certainly I need not pull it off, it is fit he ſhould ſee that too, for it will be an additinal proof of the baſeneſs of his deſigns. I then, without the leaſt ſcruple, reſolved to keep it on; ſince reaſon itſelf ſeemed to authoriſe my doing ſo. The imperceptible artifice of my little reaſonings had carried

carried me hitherto, and I began to take freſh courage.

I MADE haſte to put on my cap, which done, I went down in order to go out; I found Mrs. du Tour below with a neighbour, who called out, Where are you going, Marianne? To church, returned I, this was an equivocation, or rather a compleat falſhood; for tho' a church and a convent are almoſt the ſame thing, yet they convey two very different ideas. So much the better, child, cried ſhe, ſo much the better, go and ſubmit yourſelf to the holy will of God: my neighbour and I have been talking of you, and I have been telling her, that we will have a maſs on your account to-morrow. While ſhe was detaining me with this diſcourſe, this neighbour, who had already ſeen me two or three times, fixed her eyes upon me, and conſidered me with a vulgar kind of curioſity; the reſult of which was, that from time to time, ſhe ſhrugg'd up her ſhoulders, and cryed, Poor girl! I pity her, with all my heart! There is no body that ſees her, but muſt think ſhe comes of a good family. This kind of concern, was neither to my taſte, nor advantage; and as I could not thank them for it, I left theſe two goſſips, to purſue their reflections by themſelves.

FROM the departure of Mr. de Climal, till this moment, I had not thought like a reaſonable being; I had only amuſed my ſelf, with my diſdain for Mr. de Climal, whom I could not think of without the greateſt contempt; with my complaints againſt Valville, whom my heart told me I ſtill loved; in meditating projects of tenderneſs, and pride againſt him; and in regretting the loſs of my gaiety: but of my ſituation, I had not taken a moment's thought, it did not once enter into my mind, nor had I felt the leaſt concern about it.

But

But the uproar and confuſion of the ſtreets, at once ſcattered all theſe trifling ideas, and made me enter into myſelf. The more I obſerved the places I paſſed thro', and the continual motion of this great city, the more it appeared a place of ſilence, and ſolitude to me; a foreſt would have appeared leſs deſert; I ſhould have found my ſelf there, leſs alone, leſs a forlorn and ſolitary wanderer; was it only my misfortune to be placed in an unfrequented wild, I might then indeed hope to eſcape; but how could I fly from that deſert, in which I found my ſelf? The whole world being one to me, ſince I was not linked to it, by any of thoſe ties, which are the bonds of ſociety; thoſe dear and ſocial engagements, which unite perſons to each other. The crowd of people with which I was ſurrounded, talking to each other, the noiſe they made, the clatter of the coaches, and the ſight of ſo many houſes all inhabited, ſerved only to increaſe my affliction. Nothing that I ſee here, ſaid I to my ſelf, concerns me; how happy are theſe people, reſumed I, after a moment's pauſe! they all have their diſtinct places of ſafety, and retirement. The night will come, when they will be no longer here; they will all betake themſelves to their reſpective abodes; but for me, I don't know where to go: no body will wait for me, no body conſider my preſſing wants. I have a retreat for no longer than to-night; to-morrow I ſhall have none. This, however, was ſaying too much; for I had ſtill ſome money left, with which I might have hired a room, till heaven perhaps, would have found out a way to relieve me; but a retreat for a few days, may almoſt be called none at all.

I DID not weep at all at that time; but I was not more eaſy than if I had. I collected matter for my grief, from almoſt every object that preſented

ſented itſelf: my ſoul inſtructed itſelf in every thing that could heighten and aggravate my misfortunes; and this was not a time for tears. We only ſet open the ſluices of grief, when our ſorrows are riſen to a proper height, and ſwell too high to be confined within their banks: but not while we are opening the channels of ſorrow, and ſearching into the various cauſes we have to be afflicted. Accordingly, I ſoon after gave vent to my oppreſſed and aching heart. I was dreſſed as I was in the morning; but my clothes did not employ my thoughts; or if they did, they gave me no pleaſure: I drew the attention of many perſons as I paſſed along, which I obſerved without any ſelf-approbation. Sometimes I heard them ſay, See! what a charming creature! but theſe reflections, tho' they were not ungrateful, gave me not a moment's delight; for I was then incapable of liſtening with pleaſure, even to a ſubject ſo ſweet and entertaining to our whole ſex. Sometimes too I thought of Valville, but it was only to tell my ſelf, that it would be ridiculous to think of him any more; and indeed my ſituation repelled the ideas I had of him. How unbecoming a paſſion ſaid I to myſelf, would love be in one of my circumſtances! In an unhappy miſerable creature like me, who wanders unknown over the earth, where I am aſhamed to live; ſince I muſt be either the object of the contempt, or compaſſion of others!

I ARRIVED at laſt at the convent, in a ſituation of mind, not to be expreſſed; I asked for father St. Vincent, and they conducted me into an outer parlour, where I was told he was with another perſon. But, Madam, admire this ſtroke of fortune; can you imagine who this perſon was? 'twas Mr. de Climal; who on ſeeing me, bluſhed and turned pale alternately, whilſt I looked upon him,

him, with as much indifference as if I had never ſeen him before. Ah! is it you, Miſs, ſaid the religious, come, I am very glad to ſee you here, at this time, tho' I did not expect it? You were the ſubject of our converſation. Pray, Sir, keep your ſeat.

No, father, replied Mr. de Climal immediately, (bowing to the religious) permit me to leave you; after what has happened, it is indecent for me to ſtay any longer; I am not angry with Miſs, I will aſſure you, Sir; may heaven forgive her as I do. So far from reſenting the ſcandalous opinion ſhe has conceived of me; I ſwear to you, father, that I am more diſpoſed to ſerve her than ever; and that with the greateſt humility, I return thanks to heaven, for the affliction I have met with, in the exerciſe of my charity to her; but I believe that neither prudence nor religion, will permit me to ſee her more.

THIS ſaid, he ſaluted the father, and bowed to me too, with eyes modeſtly caſt on the ground, while I held down my head; and he was going to retire, when the monk ſtopped him by taking hold of his arm: No, Sir, no, ſaid he, you muſt not go, I conjure you to hear me. Yes, your diſpoſitions are moſt commendable, moſt edifying; you pardon her; you wiſh her well; oh, how wondrous good is this! but obſerve, you don't carry this goodneſs to its utmoſt extent; ſince, notwithſtanding all this, you abandon her in ſpight of the need ſhe ſtands in of your aſſiſtance; in ſpight of her offence, which will render your ſuccour ſo meritorious; in ſpight of that charity, which you ſtill have for her; the exerciſe of which you are going to diſpenſe with; take care, Sir, and fear leſt it ſhould be extinguiſhed in your pious breaſt. You thank God, you ſay for the little affliction, and

mortification

mortification he has ſent you, thro' her imprudence and folly. Well, would you merit this mortification which is a mercy, would you be truly worthy of it, redouble your care for this poor orphan, who will acknowledge her fault: you have told her you liked her, which her vanity, her fear, and even her virtue itſelf, might engage her to interpret to your diſadvantage. Is it not true, child? Don't you think yourſelf to blame for having injured by your unjuſt ſuſpicions this good gentleman; to whom you are under ſuch great obligations; and who, very far from looking upon you with carnal eyes, has been induced by his holy affections, by his ſweet and pious exhortations, to engage you himſelf to fly from whatever might lead you aſtray. A thouſand times bleſt be the kind providence that has conducted you here to-day. It is to you, dear Sir, ſhe is brought back; you ſee and are convinced of it. Go, daughter, confeſs your fault; repent of the folly of your heart, and promiſe to make reparation by your future reſpect, confidence and acknowledgment. Come forward, added he, becauſe I kept at a diſtance from Mr. de Climal. Oh! Sir, cryed I, addreſſing myſelf to the falſe devotee! is it I then, that am guilty? Can you expect me to hear this with patience? God, from whom nothing can be concealed, will do us both juſtice: It is impoſſible for me to have been deceived; and you know it very well. Here my heart was too full, to let me proceed, and I ſtopped to wipe away my tears.

Mr. de Climal, with all his aſſurance could not bear this; I ſaw the moſt perplexing embarraſment painted upon his countenance; and a confuſion that he could not hide. He feared his looks would betray him, and that this diſorder would induce the monk to ſuſpect his character; this made him

at

at once take the moſt effectual means to diſguiſe his heart; which was to appear ſtill with an ingenuous confuſion. She diſconcerts me, ſaid he, with a modeſt diſorder in his look and voice; I do not know what to anſwer: what inſult ſhe loads me with! ah! father, aſſiſt me to ſupport this new trial. This will be ſpread abroad! this poor child will tell it every where; ſhe will not ſpare me! Alas, child, you would do me a great piece of injuſtice; but God forgive you. Adieu, father; talk to her; endeavour to make her baniſh all theſe unjuſt ideas, if it is poſſible; it is true, I have expreſſed a great deal of tenderneſs for her; but ſhe has miſtaken the nature of my affection; it is her ſoul that I have loved, and it is her ſoul that I love ſtill; and which indeed deſerves to be loved. Yes, father, Miſs has virtue: I have found in her a thouſand amiable qualities; and I recommend her to you, ſince it is no longer proper, that I ſhould concern myſelf with her affairs.

After theſe words he retired, bowing only to the monk, who returned his compliment, with an air of uncertainty, as if he knew not how to behave. He waited upon him to the door of the convent, and followed him with his eyes till he was out of ſight. At laſt he returned to me, and with a great deal of affection in his looks began; Daughter, ſaid he, you grieve me. I am far from being ſatisfied with your behaviour; you have neither prudence nor gratitude; you are too obſtinate to believe any thing, but what enters your fooliſh head: and ſee now what it is all come to. Oh! the good man! what a loſs you will have of him! what is it that brought you here now? it will be to no purpoſe, to addreſs yourſelf to me any more; it will be intirely in vain: what

good do you think I can do you? I have already done all I am able: if you have not profited by it, it is neither my fault, nor that good man's; he has treated you as if you were his own child, for he has told me all; he ſupplied you with clothes, linnen, money; he has furniſhed you with every thing; he has aſſured me, that he paid for your board, and would willingly ſtill have paid it; and even had a deſign of ſettling you in the world; but becauſe he did not approve of your ſeeing his nephew, who is a giddy debauched young rake, you imagine, out of ſpite, that this pious and holy man loves, and is jealous of you. Is not this very ſtrange, very dreadful? he jealous! he love you! God will puniſh you, child, for the wicked thought. It ſprung from the malice of your heart, and God will puniſh you for it: I tell you ſo.

I WEPT while he ſpoke. Hear me, hear me, replied I, ſobbing, I entreat you to hear me! Well, what do you ſay, returned he, what buſineſs have you with that young man? why are you ſo obſtinately bent upon ſeeing him? What a monſtrous conduct! however, I might paſs by this folly; but to carry your ill-humour and rancour ſo far as to be ungrateful and rude to a worthy gentleman, to whom you are under ſuch obligations! What do you think will become of you? What a misfortune is it, to have ſuch a ſpirit as yours! indeed your behaviour vexes me. How genteely are you dreſſed! who would imagine you had no relations? And if you had, and they were even rich, could you be better accommodated than you are? perhaps not ſo well, and all this it is likely proceeds from him. O heavens! what can you complain of? he has ſpared no coſt———

OH! father, you are in the right, interrupted I, he has indeed ſpared no expence: but don't condemn

me

me without hearing me; I hardly know his nephew; I saw him first by chance, and have never since been in his company; then how is it possible I should have entered into any engagements with him? Mr. de Climal has abused you; and has given you pretended reasons very different from the real ones, in order to prejudice you against me.——You mentioned my clothes; they are, indeed too fine; I was surprized to see them so; and so are you now. Come father, come near, take notice of the fineness of this linnen: I would not have had it so good; and was very unwilling to accept of it on account of his behaviour before. I say, I even told him, I could not accept of it; but he made a jest of my refusal, and answer'd, Go, look in your glass, and see if this linnen is too fine for that beautiful face. Was you in my place, father, what would you have thought of this discourse? Be sincere, and tell me if Mr. de Climal, is so devout, so pious, what business had he to take notice of my face? What was it to him, whether I was beautiful or ugly. Why did he with a merry air, call me his dear rogue, in the coach, and add, that I should have a heart more sensible; and that he would leave me his, to assist me in making it so? to what purpose could he say all this? when a person speaks of the heart to a girl, and of leaving her his own, can it be piety that teaches him to make use of such expressions. Does he kiss her——

A KISS! child, interrupted the religious, a kiss! you dreamt so; that could never be, and you can't say it: who can believe you? Go, child, you are mistaken——it was no such thing——it is impossible.——A kiss!——what a dream!——poor man! it was only a jolt of the coach, some sudden motion which tost his

his head againſt yours. This is all:——to be ſure it was nothing elſe——and this, in your paſſion, you took for a kiſs.——When we hate a perſon, we always put the worſt conſtruction upon every thing he does. Ah! father, what reaſon could I have to hate him, anſwered I? I had not, at that time, ſeen his nephew, who, he ſays, is the cauſe of his anger againſt me: I had not even ſeen him, and therefore could not, on his account, be prejudiced againſt his uncle. But, ſuppoſing I was deceived with reſpect to the kiſs, which you cannot believe Mr. de Climal gave me, he would not by his conduct have confirmed my ſuſpicions: he would not have renewed them at Mrs. du Tour's; he would neither have handled nor praiſed my hair in my chamber; where he was continually ſeizing my hand, putting it to his mouth, and making me ſuch compliments that I could not hear without bluſhing. What! what is this you tell me? ſoftly, child, ſoftly, returned he, with an air more ſurprized than incredulous. Your hair that he handled, that he praiſed!——Mr. de Climal! him!——I cannot believe it: what could induce him to behave thus? It is true, he had much better not have done ſo. Theſe are abſences of mind that I confeſs don't look very decent; but to be ſure he had no meaning in it. It was a fooliſh inconſiderate action, but not a criminal one.——And my hand, cried I, which he put to his mouth, was this too an abſence of mind? Oh! your hand, replied he, your hand, I don't know how to reconcile that.——There are a thouſand people, you know, who take every body by the hand when they ſpeak to them: and, perhaps, it is a cuſtom that he has got. I am ſure I have been ſerved ſo a hundred times. Mighty well, father,

returned I, but when you take a girl by the hand, you don't kiſs it; you don't commend its beauty, you don't kneel before her and talk of love. What! how dare you tell me ſuch a monſtrous falſhood? it is quite inſufferable, cried he: hold your tongue, you little viper——it is falſe, I cannot bear to hear you——it is the devil that has inſpired you with theſe thoughts:——Yes, it is the devil to be ſure! Go, get out of my ſight;——I will hear no more:——I don't believe a word of what you have told me: neither of the hair, your hand, nor his diſcourſe; it is all a forgery. Oh! thou dangerous little creature! She makes me tremble! How invidious the reflection! to ſay, that Mr. de Climal, who leads a life of penitence and devotion, who is wholly given up to acts of piety and charity, ſhould kneel before you, and talk of love! Lord! what will this world come to? This he ſaid, joining his hands, and lifting up his eyes, as if affrighted at my diſcourſe, and as if reſolved too to baniſh thoſe diſagreeable ideas, for fear he ſhould be tempted to examine them.

INDEED, father, anſwered I, all in tears, and vexed at his prejudice, you treat me very ill: it is extremely painful to me to find myſelf uſed thus, and loaded with freſh injuries, where I came to ſeek for conſolation and redreſs. You are related to the perſon who brought me to Paris, and had the care of my education: You have told me yourſelf that you eſteemed her much; and that her virtue has edified you: it was to you ſhe made her confeſſion at her death, at a time when it cannot be ſuppoſed ſhe would ſpeak againſt her conſcience: You know what ſhe ſaid of me; I am ſure you muſt eaſily remember it, ſince it is not long ſince ſhe was taken from me; and I am not conſcious to myſelf that I have done any thing

that can give cauſe for ſuch an ill opinion of me ſince that time, as you have now entertained: On the contrary, my innocence and inexperience have excited your compaſſion, as well as the dreadful ſituation you ſaw me in: is it then poſſible for you to imagine, that I am inſtantly become the moſt vile, deceitful, and abandoned creature in the world? You ſeem ready to believe, that in the grief and extremity I am in, a man, with whom I have only been one hour, and that by mere chance, and whom I ſhall never ſee more, has rendered me ſo fond and paſſionate, that I have loſt all ſenſe of goodneſs, all conſcience, and that I have at once the courage and ſpirit to invent things which ought to make me tremble: to forge the moſt frightful falſities, and all this too, againſt a virtuous and worthy man, who was able to do me ſo much good; and whoſe friendſhip it was my intereſt to preſerve: but it is he, it is he that is the libertine; who ſeeming devout and charitable, gives me liberally in publick in hopes of bribing my virtue, and rendering me in ſecret a ſharer of his guilt and infamy. O heaven! how tranſported does ſhe appear! but, what is this ſhe tells me? whoever heard the like, cried he? holding down his head, but without interrupting me, while I went on. Yes, father, this is his deſign: this the reaſon why he dreſſed me in ſuch a manner; and if I would have conſented to leave the place I was in, and ſuffer myſelf to be carried to a houſe magnificently furniſhed; where I ſhould board with one of his acquaintance, who is, he ſays, a ſolicitor; and whom he was to inform, that I am a relation of his juſt come out of the country, he would have been ſatisfied. This is his charity, this his virtue!———

How! cried the monk, interrupting me; a ſolicitor, ſay you? is that ſolicitor married? Yes, father, anſwered I, he is married. I was to live with this ſolicitor, attended by maſters, who were to teach me to dance, ſing, and play upon the ſpinnet, while all the family were to ſhew me ſuch reſpect, that I ſhould appear as their miſtreſs. His wife was to take me away to-morrow, and carry me to her houſe; where, if I was willing to go, he would immediately preſent me with a bond to pay me five or ſix hundred livres annually, till ſomething better could be provided for me. If I had not ſhewn that I abhorred his propoſals, he would not have reproached me, as he has done, with the lewis d'ors he has given me, which I will return; nor with the clothes, which I am aſhamed to wear, and of which I will make no advantage; God forbid I ſhould. He did not tell you, I ſuppoſe, that I threatned to acquaint you with his deſigns, or that I told him you were deceived in him, and thought him as pious as he ſeemed to be: to which he had the front to anſwer, that you would look upon it as nothing, as a mere trifle which may happen to every body, and perhaps to you; and that you could not ſecure yourſelf againſt love, becauſe every good man is liable to this paſſion, and moſt in danger of being captivated by it.——Do you think, father, it is probable I could invent all this?

Good Saviour! cried he, quite amazed, what a ſtrange recital? what ought I to think of it? You ſtagger me, child. This ſolicitor puzzles and perplexes me, and ſeems to confirm all you have ſaid; I cannot deny it, for I know him; I have ſeen them together (ſaid he, as if apart) and this poor child could never have found out that Mr. de Climal employed him, and that he is married. It is an ill-looking fellow,

fellow, is not he, added he? turning to me again. I can't tell, father, returned I; Mr. de Climal only mentioned him to me; for I have neither ſeen him nor his wife. So much the better, returned he; ſo much the better. Ay, ay, you were to go to live with them, I underſtand you. The huſband is a man I never could like. But, child, how ſtrange is your ſtory! if it is true, whom can we truſt?——

If it is true! father, cried I, what inducement could I have to lye? is it on his nephew's account you ſuſpect my veracity? Oh that I was but ſhut up in a convent, never to ſee him more!

Say you ſo, child, returned he, that is well ſaid, no body can ſay better. If you have any ſuſpicion left, father, added I, aſk the linnen-draper where Mr. de Climal had placed me, what ſhe thinks of him; whether ſhe don't look upon him as a cheat and a hypocrite. Aſk his nephew if he did not ſurprize him on his knee before me, holding my hand and then kiſſing it, which I could not ſnatch from him. This ſo offended the young gentleman, that he looked upon me as loſt and ruined; and, in ſhort, father, conſider the confuſion Mr. de Climal was in, when I entered. Did not you take notice of his looks? Yes, yes, ſaid he, he bluſhed, you are in the right; I did not know what to think of it:——But, can it be poſſible?——I can't get this ſolicitor out of my head. It is a terrible article, and his confuſion too, I like no more than that; the contract is another dark ſtory: He was in great haſte ſure! what occaſion was there for the rich furniture; and ſo many maſters? whom would he have you dance with? A pleaſant kind of charity truly! I ſuppoſe it was to fit you for the maſquerade. But is it Mr. de Climal that has done all this?

Lord how much we need thy aſſiſtance! Alas, how depraved is human nature! the mind, and all the noble powers of the ſoul, are too often ſlaves to the paſſions, and rebels to reaſon. How miſerable is mankind, when this is the caſe! miſerable indeed! But child, think no more of it; I believe you do not deceive me; no, you are not capable of ſo much falſhood: but be diſcreet and ſay no more, charity demands it: do you mind? never mention this ſtrange adventure to any body: take care that you do not pleaſe the world by repeating this ſcandalous affair. They will triumph, and from his wickedneſs take occaſion to ridicule the true ſervants of God. Endeavour even to think that your eyes and ears have been deceived. This is a diſpoſition of mind that will be very agreeable to God, and which will draw down his bleſſing upon you. Come, child, don't afflict yourſelf, take courage, cried he, obſerving my tears, which began to flow faſter, becauſe he ſeemed to ſympathize with me.——Continue to be wiſe and good, and providence will take care of you. Fare you well, I have ſome buſineſs, and muſt leave you: but give me a direction to that tradeſwoman's where you live. Alas! father, anſwered I, after having given it him; this day is the laſt I am to be with her; he pays no longer for my board; and I am obliged to leave my lodging to-morrow; for ſhe expects I ſhould do ſo. If you abandon me, I ſhall have no where to fly to; you, father, are my only friend, my only reſource. Me! my dear child, returned he, alas, how I pity thee! I am poor, and can do thee no ſervice; but God can do every thing for thee; don't be diſcouraged; we ſhall ſee, child, we ſhall ſee, what is to be done for you: I will think of it. God that knows how ſenſible I am of your

affliction,

affliction, perhaps will give me the means to ſerve you. I ſhall pray to him for direction; do you do ſo too; tell him, that in his goodneſs alone you put your truſt, and that all your hopes are in his mercy. I will be with you by nine in the morning without fail, but be ſure you do not go out before that time: it grows late, and I have buſineſs to do. Adieu, compoſe yourſelf; you are a good way from home, and it is time to be going. Heaven preſerve you. Fare you well till to-morrow.

We parted without my being able to utter a ſingle word, and I went away, at leaſt as uneaſy as I was when I came to him. The pious conſolations he had given me, rendered my condition even more frightful than it had ever appeared to me before. I was not devout enough to reliſh them; and it is not ſtrange that a young mind ſhould believe that all hope is loſt, and her condition deſperate, when ſhe is told, that God alone can relieve her: 'tis a grave and ſerious idea, that diſturbs and alarms her confidence in all human aſſiſtance: for our minds are generally too much attach'd to the objects of our ſenſes to dare to ariſe above them. This makes us too often fly from our ſelves, and dread the moments of ſerious thought, and pious contemplation. O religion, how much do we wrong thy native amiableneſs! How do we deſpiſe the glorious privilege of being reaſonable and immortal! nor is it ſtrange, ſince religion, the honour, the happineſs of all intelligent minds, is almoſt every where repreſented to the young and ſprightly, as an enemy to all their joys; as inconſiſtent with gaiety and delight; and thus, our fancies having cloathed her in all the dreary pomp of horror, we ſhun and fly from the imagined ſpectre.

As I was returning home in a profound conſternation, affrighted at the proſpect that lay before me, and oppreſſed with the weight of my ſorrow, I was ſtopped by a tumult in the ſtreet, at the door of a convent: The church was open; and half perſuaded by a ſentiment of religion, which then entered my mind, and half induced to it by the deſire of giving a looſe to my grief, and venting my ſighs without reſtraint, as well as to hide my tears which drew upon me the attention of many obſervers, I entered the church, which I found empty, and threw myſelf on my knees at a confeſſional. There I abandoned my ſelf to my affliction, and ſmother'd neither my ſighs nor my groans. I lamented my miſery in the natural language of an oppreſſed heart, and as I did not expect to be heard, I cried out, "Why "am I brought into the world? miſerable that "I am! What can I do here? My God, thou "haſt placed me in this ſituation; thou knoweſt "my miſery; thou knoweſt my diſtreſs, do "thou then relieve me. O thou common fa-"ther, thou compaſſionate parent of univerſal na-"ture, be a father to me a miſerable orphan: "the moſt forlorn, the moſt wretched of all thy "creatures. Teach me to confide in thy good-"neſs, and relieve me from all my diſtreſs."—

I WAS in the midſt of my exclamations, at leaſt I believe ſo, when a lady came in unperceived; whom I did not take notice of till ſhe retired. I found afterwards, that ſhe was juſt arrived out of the country, and had given orders that her coach ſhould wait at the gate of the convent, where ſome of her friends had deſired her to deliver a letter to the prioreſs; and that while a ſervant was gone with it to her, ſhe ſtepped into the church, finding (as I did) the door open.

She

She was ſcarce entered, when my moving complaints reached her ears; ſhe heard, perhaps, all I ſaid, and ſaw me in a poſture expreſſive of the deepeſt deſpair; while my thoughts were ſo ſwallowed up with my calamities, that I even forgot where I was. My affliction, which appeared to her the moſt extreme, ſenſibly touched her; my youth, my ſhape, and perhaps my dreſs too, contributed to intereſt her in my grief.

On theſe occaſions, the eye recommends us to the heart; if you are unhappy, and make but a mean appearance, the moſt generous minds will be too apt to overlook you, or at beſt will intereſt themſelves but cooly in your affairs. You will want that attraction which flatters their vanity; and nothing can aſſiſt you ſo much in rendering them generous towards you; nothing makes them reliſh the honour and pleaſure of being ſo, as the ſeeing in you an air of diſtinction.

This lady examined me with attention, and would even have ſtaid to ſee me turn my head, if ſhe had not been told that the prioreſs waited for her in the parlour. At the noiſe ſhe made in retiring, I came to my ſelf; and as I heard ſomebody's ſteps, I was willing to ſee who it was, ſhe expected it, and our eyes inſtantly met. I could not ſee her without bluſhing, at being ſurprized in my lamentations; but in ſpite of all my confuſion, I obſerved ſhe was pleaſed with my looks, and that my affliction touched her: This appeared viſible in her countenance; and in return, mine (if it told her my thoughts) expreſſed a ſenſe of gratitude, at leaſt equal to my timidity; for ſouls are capable of this kind of intercourſe.

I remained here about half a quarter of an hour longer, both to dry up my tears, and to

revolve in my mind what I ſhould do the next day, if the monk did not ſucceed in his deſigns. How much do I envy the lot of thoſe girls in this convent, ſaid I! how happy are they! I was taken up with this thought, when the maid, who looked after the doors of the convent, came and told me very civilly, that ſhe was going to ſhut up the church; I ſhall go preſently, returned I, not daring to give her any more than a ſide look, for fear ſhe ſhould take notice, that I had been weeping; but I forgot to take care of the tone, in which I anſwered her, and this it was betrayed me. She thought it ſo moving, and beſides, obſerved me ſo young, genteel and agreeable, (as ſhe told me afterwards,) that ſhe could not help ſaying to me; Alas! dear Miſs, what is the matter? pray what diſturbs you? have you loſt any thing of value? ——— perhaps you want to ſpeak with ſome of our ladies, pray, Miſs, which of them would you ſee?

I MADE no anſwer to theſe queſtions; but my eyes began again to flow. Our ſex, Madam, are very apt to cry, when we are told that we have been weeping, and this is a puerility that we cannot eaſily ſhake off. But, pray Miſs, tell me what is the matter? continued ſhe, tell me freely; ſhall I go and inform any of our religious, that you deſire to ſpeak to them! Here I could not help reflecting on what ſhe ſaid; 'tis God, perhaps, who ſends her to inſpire me with that thought, ſaid I to my ſelf, quite moved with her tender importunity. Yes, Madam, replied I, I ſhould be very glad to ſpeak with the prioreſs, if ſhe be at leiſure. Very well, Miſs, returned ſhe, if you pleaſe to follow me, I will conduct you to her parlour, and ſhe will wait upon you in a minute. Come.

I THEN followed her up a few ſtairs, when ſhe opened a door, and the firſt object which preſented was the lady I have mentioned; whom I had never ſeen, but when ſhe went out of the church, and who then looked upon me in a manner extremely obliging. She appeared even charmed at ſeeing me again, and roſe up with a friendly air to make room for me. She was with the prioreſs of the convent, and I have already told you the cauſe of her viſit.

THE prioreſs was a ſhort perſon, but plump, fair, and double-chinned; and her complexion freſh and healthy. There are no ſuch faces to be met with in the world; for the good plight of ſuch a body, don't at all reſemble that of others. It is a conſtitution formed by eaſe, more methodically, with more art, more ceremony, and a more refined ſelf-love than our's. It is commonly either the conſtitution, the quantity of food, or a life of inactivity, that gives us this ſtate of body; but her's was obtained by the devout care which ſhe exerted inceſſantly, in conſulting the eaſe and welfare of her dear perſon; which was a proof, that notwithſtanding her having renounced the pleaſures of this life, to think on a better, ſhe indulged a ſoft, indolent, and voluptuous habit; and not only enjoyed her health, but took as much pains to procure herſelf as many ſuperfluities, as if ſhe was always on the recovery of it. Thus this conſtitution of body, nurſed up in the convent, has a different appearance from ours, which comparatively looks profane; for it not only renders the face fat and plump, but gives it a ſolemn air of gravity; and communicates to the looks not chearfulneſs and gaiety, but tranquility and content. At the firſt view, Madam, you perceive in theſe perſons an outſide courteous and affable,

though they are inwardly cold and unconcerned: it is the mien, not the ſoul, that is affected and ſeems to grow tender; for they are like fine ſtatues, which though they appear ſenſible, and expreſs the paſſions with a ſtriking beauty, yet have neither ſentiment nor goodneſs. But I will proceed; perhaps I may attempt to finiſh her picture another time.

YOUR ſervant, Miſs, ſaid the prioreſs, ſaluting me, may I know to whom I have the honour to ſpeak? The honour is mine, Madam, anſwered I, covered with ſhame, and if I had even told you who I am, I ſhould not be at all the better known to you. If I am not deceived, you are the perſon I juſt ſaw in the church, ſaid the other lady, with a tender ſmile; and I think too I ſaw you weep, which ſenſibly affected me. I am extremely obliged to you, Madam, for your concern, returned I, in a low and timorous voice, and then was ſilent. I was at a loſs how to begin, for the reception I met with from the prioreſs, though extremely civil, had diſcouraged me. I immediately loſt all my hopes without knowing why. The firſt ſight of the prioreſs ſtruck me; and made me at once imagine that her goodneſs was all ſuperficial: She will condole, but not ſuccour me, ſaid I to myſelf; I ſhall have no aſſiſtance from her. Alas, I have nothing to hope for!

MEANWHILE the ladies were ſtanding, which made me bluſh, becauſe my dreſs deceived them, and I was much below ſo much ceremony. Do you deſire to ſpeak with me alone, ſaid the prioreſs to me? as you pleaſe, anſwered I, but I ſhould be very ſorry to diſturb the lady, or give you the leaſt trouble. I will wait upon you another time. This I ſaid with an intention to eſcape from the embarraſſ-

ment

ment into which I had thrown myſelf, and to come no more. No, Miſs, no, ſaid the lady to me, taking me by the hand to make me come forward, I beg you would ſtay, my viſit is over, and I am going; ſo I ſhall leave you entirely at liberty. I have taken notice that you are very uneaſy, and you therefore deſerve every body's concern; and if I ſhould turn you away in this diſpoſition, I ſhould never forgive myſelf. Yes, Madam, ſaid I, touched with her diſcourſe, and all in tears, it is true, I am very uneaſy; I am extremely ſo: no body has ſuch cauſe for it as I; nobody ſo much reaſon to complain, nor ſo worthy of compaſſion. You, Madam, ſhew a heart ſo noble, that I will make no difficulty of ſpeaking before you; you need not retire, for you will not at all diſturb me; on the contrary, it is happy for me that you are here, becauſe you will help me to obtain of this lady what I am come to beg for on my knees (here I caſt myſelf at her feet) and that is that ſhe would be pleaſed to receive me into her houſe.

Oh, my charming dear, how you move me, cried the prioreſs, ſtretching out her arms, as if to receive me, while the lady affectionately raiſed me up. How happy am I, that you ſhould make choice of my houſe! Indeed, as ſoon as I beheld you, I foreſaw that you were to live with us. Your modeſty ſtruck me. Is not this a predeſtinated perſon, I thought with myſelf? for it is certain your vocation is writ on your countenance. Is it not true, Madam? replied ſhe addreſſing herſelf to the lady, Is it not as I ſay? how charming ſhe is! what an air of wiſdom! O, my child, continued ſhe turning to me again, how am I tranſported! how you fill me with joy! come, my angel, come: I would lay any wager that ſhe is an only child, and that they would

marry

marry her againſt her conſent. But tell me, my dear, is it now that you would enter? We ſhould, however, let your relations know of it; don't you think ſo too? But to whom muſt we ſend?

ALAS! mother, returned I, I can direct you to no body. My confuſion and my ſighs made me ſtop here. Well, ſaid ſhe, what muſt we do then? No, I can direct you to no body, continued I: You are quite miſtaken, mother; I have not even the comfort of having any relation; at leaſt if I have any, I have never known them.

SWEET Jeſu! replied ſhe, with ſomething of a colder air, and leſs affection; that is very dreadful, Miſs. No relations! how can that be? Who then takes care of you? It is likely then you have no fortune. What is become of your father and mother?

I WAS but two years old, ſaid I, when they were aſſaſſinated by robbers, who ſtopt a ſtage-coach in which I was with them; their domeſtics ſhared the ſame unhappy fate, and only I was left alive: I was carried to the vicar of a neighbouring village, and by him and his ſiſter, a lady of the moſt unſpotted virtue, was educated with the greateſt tenderneſs. But, unhappily for me, after having brought me to Paris, ſhe died, at a time when her brother was loaded with the heavieſt misfortunes. Her death plunged me into the deepeſt diſtreſs, I had no perſon who loved me upon earth, theſe two dear perſons excepted; and all the proſpect that lay before me, was to ſubſiſt upon the charity of others. A diſmal ſituation indeed! but it was the loſs of this dear lady, the loſs of her tender friendſhip, that moſt nearly afflicted me: not to mention the value and ſincere reſpect I owed her brother, whom perhaps I ſhall never ſee more. I regretted their loſs, not the

ſupport

ſupport I received from them, and would gladly have given my life to have ſaved hers. She died at the inn where we lodged: I was left there alone, and there I was robbed of almoſt all the little money ſhe left me. A monk her confeſſor took me from thence, and put me ſome days ſince into the hands of a gentleman, whom I will not name: we thought him a man of ſtrict piety and virtue, but we were both deceived, he was quite the reverſe; he placed me with Mrs. du Tour a linnen-draper; but ſcarce was I there, before he diſcloſed his wicked deſigns; when to ſeduce me from the path of virtue, he uſed all his art, and at laſt promiſed to make me a handſome ſettlement, and to provide for me with the greateſt magnificence: but I had learnt to chuſe the keeneſt ſufferings, rather than to deprive myſelf of the ſecret witneſs of an approving conſcience. I would have welcomed poverty, want, and even ſlavery, with all its train of miſeries, ſince even then I ſhould have poſſeſs'd a mind free from the reſtraints of vice and the ſting of infamy. I was ſhocked at his behaviour, and aſtoniſhed at his hypocriſy and deceit: I endeavoured to make him aſhamed of himſelf: Oh! Sir, ſaid I, have you no ſenſe of religion? what abominable thoughts do you entertain! But I ſpoke in vain, my reſolution to continue virtuous, was ſo far from bringing him to himſelf, and making him repent, that it enraged him againſt me, and made him treat me as an ungrateful wretch: he threatned to puniſh me if I diſcovered him, he reproached me with the money he has given me, with my linnen, and the gown I have on; I ſhall ſend him back the whole, as ſoon as I return to Mrs. du Tour's, who has given me leave to ſtay till to-morrow. I ſhall not know where to apply for relief, if fa-

ther

ther St. Vincent, from whom I am juſt come, and who innocently recommended me to this vile man, does not find a retreat for me to-morrow, as he has promiſed to endeavour to do. As I came from him, and was paſſing by, I ſtept into your church to dry up my tears, which I could not conceal from thoſe that paſſed by me. Then, Madam, God inſpired me with the thought of caſting myſelf at your feet, to implore your aid.

HERE I concluded my diſcourſe, or rather my little harangue, in which my grief ſupplied the place of art: and indeed it had its effect on the lady who was with us; I obſerved her wipe her eyes, but ſhe made me no anſwer, ſhe left that to the prioreſs, who had honoured my ſtory with ſome motions of her hand, and geſticulation of her countenance, which ſhe could not refuſe with decency. But I did not perceive that her heart gave any ſigns of being touched.

TRULY your ſituation is very deplorable, Miſs, ſaid ſhe, (for I had loſt all the tender epithets of dear, and her angel; all theſe endearments were ſuppreſſed) but it is not quite deſperate. You muſt ſee what father St. Vincent can do for you, replied ſhe, with an air of compaſſion. You ſay he is to find a place for you; it is much more eaſy for him to ſerve you, than for me: I am confined, and don't know how to ſet about it. We ſee, and know nobody here, except this, and ſome other ladies, who are ſometimes ſo kind as to pay us a viſit; but we are very often whole weeks without being honoured with any company at all. Beſides, our houſe is not rich; we are maintained by our boarders, whoſe number is greatly diminiſhed of late; we are in debt too, and ſo ill provided for, that I had the other day

the

the mortification to refuſe a very promiſing young lady, who deſired to be a lay-ſiſter, becauſe we can receive no more, on account of the expence, tho' we want them much. Thus on all ſides you ſee our inability; which mortifies me extremely: for you afflict me, my poor girl, (my poor girl, what a difference of ſtile! before it was my charming dear) indeed you afflict me; but why don't you apply to the miniſter of your pariſh. Our ſociety can only aſſiſt you with our prayers: it is not in a condition to receive you, and all that I can do for you, is to recommend you to the charity of the young ladies: I will make a collection for you, and remit it to you to-morrow: (a collection for an angel, what a charming propoſal!) No, mother, no, returned I, with a ſharp and reſolute tone: I have not yet ſpent the remainder of the little ſum that was left me by my dear friend: and I did not come with a deſign to beg alms. I believe that thoſe who have a ſpirit cannot ſtoop ſo low, till it is neceſſary to do it to ſupport life; and I am not yet reduced to that extremity: However, I thank you.

Nor can I ſuffer one with ſuch ſentiments to be ever reduced to it, ſaid the lady, who had hitherto kept ſilence. Take courage, Miſs, you may ſtill make pretenſions to one friend in the world. I will comfort you for the loſs of her you ſtill regret; and it ſhall not be my fault, if I am not as dear to you, as ever ſhe has been. Mother, added ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to the prioreſs, I'll pay the young lady's board; you may admit her; mean while, as ſhe is abſolutely unknown to you, and as it is juſt that you ſhould be ſatisfied who it is you receive; in order to remove all ſcruple from you, and to prevent my friendſhip for her being made a ſubject of ridicule, we need only ſend your ſervant to Mrs. du Tour, the linnen-draper, and her teſtimony in

miſs's

miſs's favour will juſtify both your conduct and mine.

I IMMEDIATELY found by this diſcourſe, that ſhe herſelf would be very glad to know a little more of the object of her friendſhip, and to be ſatisfied who it was ſhe obliged. But pray obſerve the generous courſe ſhe took to learn it; with what reſpect, care, and addreſs, ſhe concealed from me, the little uncertainty ſhe might reaſonably be in as to the truth of what I had told her. Theſe inſtances of goodneſs are invaluable; and of all the obligations a great and noble ſoul can confer upon us, the ſecret politeneſs of ſentiment, theſe tender regards, are the moſt moving. I call them ſecret, becauſe the heart that beſtows them, does not put them to the ſcore of the other's gratitude; it thinks they are only perceptible to itſelf; it conceals them from you, and as it were buries the whole merit of them in oblivion. This is a height of goodneſs which is quite angelic. For my part I preſently ſaw into her ſoul; for thoſe perſons who have a little of this nobleneſs of heart themſelves, are extremely quick ſighted in obſerving it in others, and eaſily take notice of every inſtance of it.

I NOW ſeized with tranſport, tho' very reſpectfully, the hand of this charming lady; I kiſſed it long, and bathed it with the moſt tender and delicious tears I ever ſhed in my life. For the ſoul is conſcious of its own dignity, and every thing that ſhews it an air of reſpect, penetrates and enchants it; for our pride is never ungrateful.

MADAM, ſaid I to her, do you conſent that I write two or three words to Mrs. du Tour, by the ſervant; you ſhall ſee my letter; for I think, in the circumſtances in which I am placed, ſhe may fear being deceived, and being apprehenſive of a trick, may not explain herſelf freely. Yes, do, Miſs, anſwered ſhe, you are in the

right,

right. Pray write to her. Mother, will you be ſo good as to give us a pen and ink? With pleaſure, ſaid the prioreſs quite ſoftened; and inſtantly gave us them thro' the grate. When I wrote the note, which was as follows.

" MADAM,

" THE perſon who bears this letter, ap-
" plies to you to be informed of what you
" know of my affairs. Be ſo good as to tell her
" with the utmoſt freedom, and without the leaſt
" reſerve, whatever relates to my behaviour, and
" character, as well as the melancholy diſaſters
" of my life; and the manner in which I was
" introduced to you. I ſhould be very much
" diſpleaſed, if a regard to me ſhould induce you
" to ſuppreſs the moſt trifling particular; there-
" fore make no difficulty of ſpeaking according
" to your conſcience, without conſidering
" whether it will be of advantage to me or
" not.

I am,

Madam,

Your humble Servant,

MARIANNE.

THIS done I preſented the paper to my kind benefactreſs, who after having read it, ſmiling with an air that ſeemed to ſay, this was a ſufficient proof of my innocence, gave it thro' the grate to the prioreſs, ſaying, I believe you will be of my opinion, that a perſon who can write in this manner, has nothing to fear: Very good, replied the prioreſs, when ſhe had read it; it is extremely good; nothing could be better expreſſed; and immediately whilſt I was folding

up

up the letter rang the bell to call a ſervant. As ſoon as ſhe entered, ſhe paid her reſpects to the lady, who ſaid to her, I have ſeen your ſiſter in the country, ſhe is very well pleaſed with the ſituation I have placed her in, and I have ſomething to ſay to you, added ſhe, taking her aſide: I could not help fancying that I was the ſiſter ſhe was talking of, and that ſhe was buſy in giving her orders in which I was concerned, and two or three words dropt, ſuch as, Yes, Madam, leave it to me, pronounced pretty loud by the ſervant who inceſſantly looked on me, ſufficiently proved it.

However the girl took the note, went out, and returned in about an hour after. I ſhall paſs over what was ſaid, between the lady, the prioreſs, and I, during this interval. But I forgot one circumſtance, which is, that before ſhe entered the parlour, another ſervant came to tell the lady, that a perſon deſired to ſpeak a word with her in the next room. Upon this ſhe ſtept out, but did not ſtay above five or ſix minutes, before ſhe came in again; but ſcarce was ſhe entered, when the maid appeared, who probably had juſt left her, and who with a well-boding gaiety, and ſomething of the enthuſiaſm of friendſhip, addreſſed me in this manner. Bleſs me, Miſs, how much good have I juſt heard of you; and then addreſſing herſelf to the lady, cried, Madam, you can hardly believe all they have told me, they ſay ſhe has wit, and good-nature, is prudent, virtuous, affable, modeſt, in ſhort ſhe is the beſt girl in the world. She is a treaſure; yet nevertheleſs ſhe is ſo unhappy, that Mrs. du Tour and I have been crying together about her; ſhe has neither father nor mother, nobody knows who ſhe is, this is all the fault ſhe has, and if ſhe had not

feared

feared God, ſhe would not have been ſo unfortunate; witneſs a very rich man that ſhe diſmiſſed for good reaſons, like a villain as he is, but I will tell you that another time, I only mention the moſt material things. As to the reſt, Madam, I did as you ordered me; I did not tell your name to Mrs. du Tour, ſo ſhe don't know who it was that wanted information.

THE lady bluſhed at this indiſcretion of the ſervant, which informed me what was the ſubject of their converſation, and this bluſh was a new obligation, which I placed to her account. Very well, child, that is ſufficient, ſaid ſhe to her, and you Marianne, will not you enter into the convent to-day? have you any thing to take from the linnen-draper's? muſt you go thither again? Yes, Madam, replied I, but I ſhall return in half an hour, if you will permit me to go. Do, Miſs, ſaid ſhe, and I will wait for you. I then went out, and as the convent was not far from Mrs. du Tour's I arrived there in a little time, tho' I felt ſome pain in my foot.

WHEN I entered, Mrs. du Tour was chatting at her door with one of her neighbours: I gave her my thanks in the moſt obliging terms, and embraced her moſt affectionately, for I thought ſhe deſerved it. Well, Marianne, cried ſhe, thank God you have had good luck, how did you bring it about, how did you manage it? and, pray who is the lady that ſent to me?——

HOLD, Madam, replied I, I muſt be ſhort, I am in extreme haſte, and have not time to anſwer all your queſtions; I am going to undreſs myſelf, and put this gown into the bundle I have been making, which I muſt immediately finiſh, and which you will be ſo good as to ſend to Mr. de Climal's nephew. Yes, yes, returned ſhe, Mr. de Valville,

I know him, I ſerve him with linnen: you are right, the very man, ſaid I, going up ſtairs into my room.

As ſoon as I was there, with all poſſible haſte I pulled off the gown I had on, and ſnatching up the old one, put it in the bundle. This was done inſtantly: There were an ink-ſtand, and ſome ſheets of paper upon the table, I took one, and and wrote thus to Valville.

SIR,

"I have known Mr. de Climal your uncle but "a few days, and am yet ignorant where he "lives: On this account I am at a loſs how to "direct theſe clothes to him, I therefore deſire "you would ſend them. He told me, he gave "them to me out of charity (for I am poor) whilſt "I accepted them in that light; but as this is "not true, and he has deceived me, they are no "longer mine; I therefore return them back, as "alſo ſome money which he forced me to accept of. "I ſhould not have had recourſe to you, on this "occaſion, if I had time to ſend to a monk, "called father St. Vincent, who to ſerve me "had recommended me to your uncle; and will "teach you, when you pleaſe to reproach your-"ſelf for the inſult you have caſt upon an afflicted, "virtuous maid, and one that is perhaps your "equal. I am,

SIR,

Yours, &c.

MARIANNE

I HAD no ſooner ſealed up the letter, but I took the bundle, and carried it down ſtairs. I ſuppreſs here a particular account of a number of circumſtances that you will eaſily gueſs at; ſuch as packing

ing up my old clothes to go to the convent, my taking leave of Mrs. du Tour, who promiſed my letter and bundle ſhould be ſent within an hour to Valville's; the repeated aſſurances we gave each other of our friendſhip, and the tears ſhe almoſt ſhed on her part, for ſhe did not quite cry, tho' I believed every minute ſhe was going to do it; but I let fall ſome tears of ſadneſs in going from her. Methought it ſeemed as if I was leaving a ſort of relation, and even my native country too; without even time to think of this ſudden change of circumſtances. There was ſomething too much for me in the rapidity of the events. But however childiſh this was, can you look upon my going with the thoughts of being for ever excluded from the ſight of Valville as nothing? I had ſaid indeed I would never ſee him more, but it was very hard to be thus taken at my word: I had promiſed indeed never to ſee him more, but not never to be able to ſee him: this is another matter; an affair of a much more ſerious nature, and the heart will not bear to be uſed thus rudely; for what gives it a firmneſs, and intrepidity in a caſe like mine, is the power of being weak; and this freedom I had loſt by my change of circumſtances; this made me ſigh and abated my courage.

I HAD told Mrs. du Tour, that I was going to a convent; but what the name of it was, I was entirely ignorant of, as well as the ſtreet it was in; but I knew my way; the porter followed me with my box of clothes, and I imagined, that at his return he would inform her, and if by chance ſhe ſhould ſee Valville, ſhe might tell him; but I can't ſay that I wiſhed ſhe might, it was only a reflection that I made on the way, which ſerved to amuſe me. Well, but ſuppoſe he ſhould know the place of my retreat, ſaid I to my ſelf, what then? what

what is that to me? nothing at all; will he attempt to see me, or write to me? Oh no, to be sure, said I; but yes, sure, I should have said, if I had answered sincerely, and according to the agreeable probability, that he would do so.

We soon arrived at the convent: I went in, but much worse dressed than when I went out. My benefactress asked me the reason. I told her I had left all the clothes she had seen before with Mrs. du Tour, that she might return them to the gentleman who had given them to me. My dear child you shall lose nothing by that, said she, embracing me; after which I entered, and came again to thank her through the grate of the parlour. She left me, and I became from that time a boarder.

I have many things to tell you relating to the convent. I soon became acquainted with several persons there. I was beloved by some, and hated by others. But I shall give you a particular account of my abode here, which shall begin my fourth part; and shall finish this by an event, which has been the cause of my entring again into the world.

Two or three days after I was here, my benefactress made me be dressed in as genteel a manner as if I had been her own daughter; and provided me with all the clothes which would have been necessary for my appearing in that character. Judge of the sentiments with which her goodness inspired me. I never saw her but with transports of joy and tenderness. They observed that I had a good voice, and understood something of music; and she was desirous of perfecting me in it. The prioress had a niece, to whom she allowed a master of the harpsicord, and he was appointed to attend me too. These are talents, said my amiable lady, that will always be of service to you. If you take the veil, they will give you an

air

air of diſtinction, and make you taken notice of: and if you enter into the world, they will be looked upon as graceful and innocent accompliſhments.

She conſtantly came to ſee me every two or three days; and it was already three weeks that I had lived there, in a ſituation of mind very difficult to deſcribe. I endeavoured to enjoy a perfect tranquility; but found, however, that I had it not in my power. I baniſhed from my thoughts the intruding ideas that would hinder my enjoying a perfect repoſe; but in vain: my reflections and uneaſineſs returned together, and a ſecret folly, for which I continually reproached myſelf, tormented me inceſſantly. Valville knew, without doubt, where I was placed, and yet I heard no more of him; my heart was at a loſs how to account for ſuch a conduct. If he had found the means to let me hear from him, he could have gained nothing by it; I had renounced him; but I did not intend by that, that he ſhould renounce me too. What a fantaſtical ſentiment!

One afternoon as I was thinking of this, in ſpight of my endeavours to think no more of it, one came to tell me, that a footman asked to ſpeak to me. I fancied he came from my benefactreſs, and went into the parlour. I hardly looked at this pretended domeſtic, who ſhewed only one ſide of his face, and with a trembling hand preſented me a letter. Who do you come from? ſaid I. You'll ſee, Miſs by the letter, ſaid he, with ſome emotion in his voice; which my heart knew again even before I did: for I inſtantly felt myſelf moved by a kind of ſympathy. I caſt a look at him as I received the letter, and ſaw his eyes fixed upon me. How much was I ſurprized! Our eyes were fixed upon each other, while we remained

ſome time without uttering a word; and it was only our hearts that had ſpoke, when a ſervant entered, and told me my benefactreſs was coming up, and that her coach was in the court. But ſhe did not name her; it is your good mamma, ſaid ſhe, and then left us. Pray, Sir, retire, cried I, in confuſion to Valville, (for you ſee very well it was he) who only ſighed and left me.

I HID my letter while I waited for my generous friend, who appeared in an inſtant with a lady ſhe brought with her; a lady, who had every qualification to render her perfectly amiable; who ſoon engaged my affections, and whom you will love too, when I have given you her picture, which I intend to inſert in the fourth part, with that of the dear woman I called my mother.

The End of the THIRD PART.

THE

THE VIRTUOUS ORPHAN.

PART IV.

I HAVE made you wait ſo long, Madam, for the foregoing parts of my life, that I perſuade myſelf you will be ſurprized to hear from me again ſo ſoon. Your impatience is very obliging, and I intend to let you ſee I think ſo, by an extraordinary haſte in ſending you this part ſoon after the laſt. See now if my lazineſs is not of advantage to me? Perhaps you would not now have been pleaſed at my diligence, nor even have taken notice of it, had I been always ſo expeditious. Sometimes even our faults are of ſervice to us, and ſet us in a better light than if we never had them; becauſe whenever we reform, the contraſt between what we were, and what we are now, is ſure to heighten our real virtues, and give them a more diſtinguiſhed luſtre.

Do you remember Mr. de Beaufort? he was a perpetual grumbler, and of a moſt forbidding countenance. But when he was good humoured for one quarter of an hour, he was more admired and taken notice of in that ſhort duration than he would have been in a year, had he been always agreeable. We then hardly ever knew a perſon of ſo ſweet a diſpoſition. But I muſt begin my fourth part; for perhaps it is neceſſary for you to read it before

you will be convinced that it is the fourth. However, before I continue my hiſtory, I am to give you the portrait of my benefactreſs, with that of the lady ſhe brought with her; to both of whom I am under obligations worthy of an eternal acknowledgment.

THOUGH I ſay I am going to give you the pictures of theſe two ladies, I only mean to give you the out-lines, a ſort of rough ſketch: for it is impoſſible to paint them entire and perfectly like themſelves. I am well acquainted with many perſons whom I do not know how to deſcribe. There is ſomething in them which I cannot take ſufficient hold of; that I only perceive for myſelf but not for others; and which if I was to attempt would be very ill performed. Theſe are objects of ſentiment; ſo extremely complex, and ſo nicely delicate, that they confuſe me whilſt I reflect upon them. I don't know where to take them, in order to expreſs them in a manner capable of being apprehended. Is it not the ſame with you? It ſeems to me, that my ſoul, on a vaſt variety of occaſions, knows more than it can expreſs, and that it has ſenſations of its own very different from its common ideas. But this thought will carry me too far: let us return to our ladies and their pictures. They will be very imperfect, at leaſt I am afraid ſo. And I tell you of it before hand, that you may chuſe either to read them or paſs them over.

MY benefactreſs was about fifty years old. Though ſhe had been a fine woman in her youth, ſhe had a condeſcending ſweetneſs in her look, that blunted all her charms, and hindered their being ſo piercing as they would have been: for it is the awe and reſpect that beauty inſpires, that make us adored, by giving us a kind of elevation over our admirers. When a perſon has an air

of

of ſo much goodneſs, ſhe appears leſs ſtriking. We only think of her amiable character, but not at all of the graces of her exterior form. It renders *her* indeed more eſteemed, but her beauty leſs admired: and we are more pleaſed with her company, than curious in looking upon her. Thus I believe it had been with this excellent lady; no notice was taken of her attractive charms, but only that ſhe was the beſt woman in the world: for this reaſon I have been told that ſhe has had few lovers, but many friends; and thoſe even amongſt our ſex: but this is not to be wondered at, ſince ſhe always diſcovered an innocent inattention; a mien ſimple, condeſcending, and affable, which did no violence to the ſelf-love of her companions, and made her rather reſemble a confidant than a rival.

Her features were worthy to be praiſed, though they were not formed to captivate. Her eyes demanded more friendſhip than love. Her ſhape was juſtly proportioned, and which, if ſhe had pleaſed, would have appeared perfectly genteel; but this was not what ſhe aimed at, for ſhe had no other motion than what was natural and neceſſary, and expreſſive of a ſoul full of innocence and truth. As to her wit, I believe it never was ſaid that ſhe had any, though no body could ever ſay ſhe wanted it. Her converſation pleaſed every body, without having any thing in it remarkably ſhining. She ſaid nothing that was either ſmart or weak; but her diſcourſe was all ſweet and ſenſible. Tho' ſubject of converſation was the moſt indifferent to her, ſhe ſtill kept up her character, and thought or ſaid nothing but what proceeded from that ſtock of goodneſs, which was the ſpring of her actions.

BUT pray, Madam, don't imagine that this benevolent temper was a blind and ſottiſh paſſion, the diſpoſition of a weak and puſillanimous ſoul; which appears ridiculous even to the perſons who profit by it. No, her's was a virtue; it was the ſentiment of an excellent heart, that inſtantly took the impreſſion of another's grief; it was a delicacy for the happineſs of others, which had infinitely more charms than the moſt ſparkling wit; it was a frank and genuine benevolence, conducted by reaſon and good ſenſe.

I SHOULD not tell you that this lady had a nobleneſs of ſoul; this perhaps would confound your ideas, as it is a character too commonly uſurped to diſguiſe and palliate oſtentation. Her diſpoſitions to goodneſs were more ſimple, more amiable, but leſs brilliant. And thoſe perſons, to whom it is commonly aſcribed, have very often not the beſt hearts. They are ſo tranſported with the pleaſure and glory of their generoſity, that they neglect numberleſs little duties. They love to be praiſed, whilſt ſhe, on the contrary, eſteemed it too mean to make this the ſole end of her actions. She never ſhewed her beneficence, becauſe of the honour that accompanied it, but becauſe you had need of her aſſiſtance; her deſign was to remove your anxieties, and give you repoſe; then ſhe ſhared in your tranquility. An expreſſion of gratitude gave her a ſenſible pleaſure, becauſe ſhe looked upon it as a proof of your ſatisfaction; for whenever ſhe was loaded with many acknowledgments for her kindneſs, ſhe thought you found the benefit of having received them, and thus ſhe loved to think of them; for whatever you ſaid to her, it was only your joy and ſatisfaction that could be her recompence.

ONE

ONE thing I forgot that is very ſingular, which is, that though ſhe never boaſted of her own good actions, you might ſafely boaſt of yours before her without fear of her taking offence. The pleaſure of hearing you ſay, that you were good, or had been ſo, ſhut her eyes to your vanity, or elſe perſuaded her, that it was very allowable; Yes, you are in the right to eſteem yourſelf, would ſhe ſay, nothing is more juſt than that you ſhould do ſo.

WITH reſpect to thoſe who value themſelves without any merit, who pique themſelves on their rank or riches, a ſort of people inſupportably burthenſome to every body elſe, they did not at all diſturb her: ſhe did not love them, and that was all: ſhe had only a kind of cool, tranquil, polite antipathy for them. But the ſpreaders of ſlander and defamation ſhe could never bear, they indeed fatigued her, becauſe their fault was grating to her natural goodneſs; whilſt the vain boaſter only ſhocked her reaſon and the ſimplicity of her heart.

She pardoned great talkers, and would laugh heartily at the uneaſineſs they gave her, whilſt they thought they had been entertaining her.

DID ſhe find perſons of an obſtinate diſpoſition, who refuſed to hear reaſon, ſhe heard them with patience, and was not at all the leſs their friend. ———Well, ſhe would ſay, they are honeſt people however, they have their faults, and no perſon is exempt from them.———Every thing that did not proceed from a malevolent diſpoſition, appeared a trifle to her. Her tender heart never abandoned any perſon to miſery: neither the lyar, whom ſhe heartily pitied, nor the ungrateful, who is inſenſible of the moſt refined pleaſure that fills the human breaſt. But ſhe was truly cold to thoſe of a malignant ſpirit; ſhe would however

aſiſt them; but ſhe always did it without that delight and reliſh which accompanied her other acts of beneficence. Theſe were with her the truly wicked; and the only perſons with whom ſhe was at variance; and againſt theſe ſhe had a natural and invincible hatred.

A COQUETTE, who would captivate every man, was much worſe in her eſteem, than a woman deluded through exceſs of paſſion for one. Becauſe ſhe thought it a leſs crime for a perſon to be weak, than to render others ſo; and that it was better ſo want prudence than principles, as a weak heart is preferable to an impertinent and corrupted one.

SHE had a greater attachment to the moral virtues, than to the peculiar duties of chriſtianity: regarded more the punctilious exerciſes of inſtrumental religion, than ſhe complied with them: honoured more the very devout, than ſhe thought of being ſo herſelf: loved God more than ſhe feared him, and conceived of his juſtice and goodneſs in a manner almoſt peculiar to herſelf; and from the benevolent diſpoſitions of her own tender heart, juſtly inferred what muſt be thoſe of the tender parent of mankind who had fixed them there.

SUCH was this amiable, this dear lady, but I have already been too long: If you think ſo, remember that it is my benefactreſs, and that I am very excuſable, if I have a little forgot myſelf, and been loſt in the pleaſure I have taken in ſpeaking of her.

THERE yet remains another deſcription, and that is of the lady that came with her; but do not be afraid, I ſhall not trouble you with it at preſent: I ought to ſpare myſelf a little, for I ſuſpect that it will not be ſhort, nor indeed very eaſy, and therefore it is proper that we ſhould both take breath.

breath. I owe it to you, however, who will diſpenſe with my promiſe of placing them together. I foreſee that it will be in this part, but I aſſure you, not till near the concluſion; and perhaps you would not be ſorry if you found I entirely omitted it. You may expect at leaſt to find ſomething very ſingular in it. You have juſt ſeen the picture of an excellent heart; but that which I have ſtill to paint, is not leſs extraordinary, tho' very different from it. For as to her mind, it had all the ſolidity of the other ſex, mixed with the delicacy and tenderneſs of ours.

BUT it is time to continue my narration. How do you do, child, ſaid my dear friend to me, as ſhe entered the parlour? Here is a lady who is deſirous to ſee you; for I have been ſaying ſomething to her in your favour. I long to have you acquainted that ſhe may love you as I do. Well, Madam, added ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to her friend, there ſhe is, how do you like her? is it not true that Miſs is genteel? No, Madam, replied the lady with an air of friendſhip, no, ſhe is not genteel: excuſe me, Madam, your character is not juſt: you ſpeak with the modeſty of a mother. For my part, who am a ſtranger, I muſt tell your frankly what I think, and that is, that ſhe is charming. And, indeed, I never ſaw a more amiable form, or an air more noble.

I CAST down my eyes at this flattering compliment, and could only anſwer with my bluſhes. They ſat down, the converſation ſtill turning upon me. Is there any thing in Miſs's look, which could preſage the misfortunes ſhe has ſuffered, ſaid Mrs. Dorſin? (this was the lady's name) but ſoon or late every one has troubles in this world: and her's are paſſed, I dare ſay. I believe ſo too, anſwered I modeſtly; ſince I have had the happineſs

pineſs to meet this lady, who has been ſo good as to intereſt herſelf in my welfare, I may reaſonably hope that my happineſs is begun. At this my benefactreſs advancing, put her hand to the rails to take hold of mine, whilſt I could only put two or three fingers through: Yes, my dear, ſaid ſhe, I love you, and you deſerve it: from henceforward you ſhall have no inquietude, no care to diſturb you: what I have hitherto done for you is nothing; don't ſpeak of it. I have already called you my daughter, imagine that you are ſo, and that I love you as much as if you were.

THIS anſwer touched me; my eyes grew moiſt; I endeavoured to kiſs her hand, of which ſhe could only give me two or three fingers. Upon this Mrs. Dorſin cried out, What an amiable creature! Do you know that I am a little jealous of you, Madam; for ſhe loves you with ſo good a grace, that I muſt make pretenſions to her love too: You are her mother, and I muſt be at leaſt her friend. Don't you conſent to it, Miſs?

MADAM, returned I, my reſpect forbids my ſaying, Yes: I durſt not take that liberty: but if I ſhould be ſo bleſt, I ſhould look upon this as one of the moſt happy days of my life. You are in the right, child, ſaid my benefactreſs, and the greateſt ſervice I can do you, is, to deſire this lady to give her word, that ſhe will grant you her friendſhip. You promiſe it, Madam? added ſhe, ſpeaking to Mrs. Dorſin; who with an air of condeſcenſion replied, I give it her then, on condition that next to you, ſhe will love no body in the world ſo well as me. No, no, ſaid my mamma, you don't do yourſelf juſtice: I forbid her making the leaſt difference between us: and I dare ſay ſhe will obey me. I ſtill caſt down

my

my eyes, ſaying very ſincerely, that I was both confuſed and charmed.

HERE my benefactreſs looked at her watch, It is later than I thought it was, ſaid ſhe, I muſt go preſently; I ſhall make you but a ſhort viſit at preſent, for I have many others to make. I am pretty much fatigued, and deſign to be at home betimes, for I had not any reſt all laſt night, I have been perplexed with ſo many different thoughts. Indeed, Madam, ſaid I, I thought you ſeemed a little melancholy (and that was true) and it made me uneaſy; pray has any thing diſturbed you? Yes, replied ſhe, I have a ſon, who is a deſerving young gentleman, and has hitherto given me the higheſt ſatisfaction; but now he has very much diſpleaſed me. I was willing to have him married: a very advantageous match offered: the lady was rich, amiable, and of a good family: her relations approved of it, and were deſirous to haſten the ceremony: and my ſon himſelf a month ago, conſented that the friends on both ſides ſhould meet to agree upon articles. He has been introduced to the young lady; has ſeen her more than once, but for ſome weeks has neglected coming to a concluſion: nay, he ſeems now quite indifferent. His conduct afflicts me extremely; eſpecially as I am under a kind of engagement to a very conſiderable family, to whom I do not know how to excuſe the ſhocking indifference he has lately expreſſed.

I CANNOT believe it will laſt long, ſaid Mrs. Dorſin; and I repeat it to you again, your ſon is no fool: he has wit, good-ſenſe, and honour. You know his tenderneſs, and the deference and reſpect he has always expreſſed for you: and I am perſuaded you have nothing at all to fear. He ſhall dine with me to-morrow. He will hear what I

have to ſay. Come, leave it to me, I will talk to him. For to ſay that the girl he found in returning from maſs, has made him averſe to the marriage; I have already told you is what I can never believe.

In returning from maſs, Madam! ſaid I, a little aſtoniſhed, becauſe of the conformity this adventure had with mine. Yes, in returning from maſs, anſwered Mrs. Dorſin: they came from church together; but there is no probability that they have ſeen each other ſince. O, but they repreſent her ſo very beautiful! it is that alarms me, ſaid my benefactreſs; and you know when ſhe was gone the meaſures he took to find her out.

The meaſures he took: another motive for me to liſten.

O dear Madam, with what little reaſon do you diſturb yourſelf, cried Mrs. Dorſin! ſhe is a pretty girl, it is true; but what reaſon can you have to think that ſhe has turned his head; for it cannot he queſtioned but ſhe muſt be ſome tradeſman's daughter dreſſed in her beſt clothes becauſe it was a holy-day.

A holy-day! Oh! is it then me? ſaid I to myſelf trembling, and not daring to aſk any more queſtions.

I would aſk, continued Mrs. Dorſin, if a lady of diſtinction would have walked alone through the ſtreets, without a footman, without any one to attend her, as you find ſhe did; but what is more extraordinary, ſhe herſelf ſeemed conſcious that ſhe was not ſuitable to your ſon; for ſhe would neither tell him where ſhe came from, where ſhe was going, or where ſhe lived. So however enamoured you ſuppoſe him, where will he find her again? He has taken every ſtep for that purpoſe, you

you ſay; his ſervants tell you, that he made his valet run after the hackney-coach which carried her away (Oh! how my heart beat here) but is it poſſible for a man to keep up with a coach? this ſame valet indeed, when you examined him, told you, he ran after it, but at laſt loſt ſight of it.

So much the better,——thought I here; it is no more me: the valet that followed me ſaw me ſet down at our door.

BUT the fellow has perhaps deceived you, continued Mrs. Dorſin: you are ſenſible he is in his maſter's confidence.

OH! that is very likely too: ſaid I to myſelf, it is certainly me!

WELL, we will ſuppoſe that he ſaw the coach ſtop, continued the lady, and that your ſon knows where this pretty creature lives, what can you conclude from it? that he has taken ſuch a violent paſſion for her, that he would ſacrifice to her his fortune and all the advantages of his birth: that he would forget who he is, and what he owes to you and himſelf. Is this your ſon? there is ſcarce room to fear his being ſo weak and thoughtleſs. You can't ſuſpect it. I will allow that the girl may be agreeable to him, that ſhe might be formed to pleaſe, and a man of his age and condition might have a fancy to ſee how far ſuch an adventure would carry him. This is all that can be in it. You may compoſe yourſelf. I'll promiſe you we will marry him, if we have only the charms of this little adventurer to combat with: a formidable enemy indeed!

LITTLE adventurer! what an ill-boding epithet! ſhall I never be able to diſengage myſelf from this painful ſituation, ſaid I to myſelf? However had the ladies left off here, I ſhould not have known what to hope or fear; but my benefactreſs cleared up every thing.

I SHOULD have been of your opinion, returned ſhe with an air of inquietude, if I was not told that my ſon is grown peeviſh ſince this unhappy adventure: and it is certain I have found him entirely changed. You know he is naturally of a gay diſpoſition; but now I never ſee him, but he looks dull, perplexed, and thoughtful: his friends take notice of it: The chevalier, who uſed to be continually with him, is become a burthen to him; his company fatigues him, and accordingly yeſterday he was denied to him. Add to this the running about of the valet I mentioned, who is ſent out four times every day; and with whom, when he returns, he has always a long conſultation in private. But this is not all; I forgot to tell you one thing, and that is, that I have been this morning to ſpeak to the ſurgeon that was ſent for to examine the young woman's foot.

THIS was a circumſtance that at once ſtruck me. At the article of the foot, figure to yourſelf the poor orphan humbled as low as poſſible. I do not know how I did to breathe for the terrible palpitation that ſeized my heart. Oh! it is then me, thought I. Methinks I am going out of the church, that I find myſelf in the ſtreet where I fell, dreſſed in thoſe hateful clothes Mr. de Climal had given me, adorned with all the trifles that had procured me the title of a ſmart laſs in her holiday clothes. What a ſituation was this, Madam! but what moſt humbled and afflicted me was, the reflection that the noble and diſtinguiſhed air, which Mrs. Dorſin at her entrance complimented me with, and which my benefactreſs acknowledged me poſſeſſed of, would no longer be of ſervice to me, when I ſhould be known. Was it for me to preſume to break a marriage like this? I might have the mein of a lady of diſtinction, provided

provided I had no other fault but being unfortunate, and while my charms produced no diſorder; but when beloved of Valville, and guilty of the uneaſineſs he gave his mother, I might well be reduced to a ſmart laſs, an adventurer, and a little creature beneath their notice, who was no longer worthy their care, and who has been very bold to preſume to wound the heart of a gentleman. But let us liſten to my dear mother, who proceeded, while ſome hints now and then eſcaped her, that helped to revive my courage. She was ſpeaking of the ſurgeon, and went on.

He told me, continued ſhe, that ſhe was very young, but extremely amiable; that ſhe had the air of a lady of the firſt quality; and that my ſon, in the whole of his behaviour, expreſſed a ſincere reſpect for her: and it is this reſpect that diſquiets me. I do not know how to reconcile theſe things with the idea I form to myſelf of the daughter of ſome mean mechanic dreſſed up in all her finery. If he has any real love and eſteem for her, it muſt be ſuch as will be dangerous, and carry him very far. You are ſenſible that this does not agree with her being a girl of no education, and without merit; and his tenderneſs convinces me that I ſhall have nothing at all to hope for from him: his having ſenſe and honour, are the very reaſons that will prevent there being any remedy to cure his unfortunate paſſion. Now put yourſelf in my place, and pray conſider the many melancholy conſiderations that once crouded into my mind. But ſtay, however, there was one joined with them which was very agreeable. Did you take notice of that melancholy in which Valville was involved ever ſince the day we became acquainted? Did you obſerve the reſpect which the ſurgeon ſaid he expreſſed for me? My heart, though full of trouble,

trouble, had, amidſt its various perturbations, taken notice of theſe minute particulars. Nor had the conſequences drawn from them by my dear friend eſcaped my attention. If his paſſion is built upon a true eſteem for her, his love is real, ſhe had ſaid; I was immediately of her opinion: this conſequence appeared very juſt, as well as agreeable. Here I felt a mixture of ſhame, inquietude, and pleaſure; but the pleaſure was exceſſive: the idea of being truly loved by Valville had ſo many charms in it, that it inſpired me with ſentiments quite noble and diſintereſted: indeed the heart is in ſo good a ſituation when thus delighted, that you will not much wonder at the part it made me take, which was a ſufficient proof that Valville had reaſon to reſpect me. I was nothing, nor did I poſſeſs any thing worthy of rendering me conſiderable; but thoſe who have neither title nor riches to boaſt of, have a ſoul——a ſoul ſuperior to the glittering ſplendor of wealth and greatneſs, that can command a more juſt reſpect, a higher veneration, and that can ſupport its dignity in the midſt of the bittereſt afflictions. Obſerve how mine extricated me out of this perplexing ſituation.

After Mrs. Dorſin had replied to my benefactreſs, in anſwer to what ſhe had juſt ſaid, this laſt perſon riſing up in order to go, reſumed: ſince he is to dine to-morrow with you, endeavour to diſpoſe him to this marriage; and as I cannot be ſatisfied with his adventure, I am reſolved, at all hazards, to place ſomebody near him or his footman, as a ſpy upon their actions; and I will have one of them followed wherever he goes.—— By this means, perhaps I ſhall diſcover who this little creature is: ſuppoſing that he has found her out, it is proper we ſhould find her out too; for it can't

can't be unuſeful to know her. Farewel, Marianne; I ſhall ſee you again in two or three days. No, ſaid I to her, letting fall ſome tears, no, Madam, it is all over. You muſt ſee me no more. You muſt abandon me to the misfortunes, which follow mewherever I go; for God will not ſuffer me to enjoy a laſting repoſe. What would you ſay, child, returned ſhe? What do you mean? Why ſhould I abandon you? Here my tears ran in ſuch abundance, that I remained ſometime unable to ſpeak a word. You make me very uneaſy, my dear child, why do you weep ſo? added ſhe, preſenting her hand as ſhe had done ſome minutes before. But I durſt no more give her mine. I drew it back, covered with ſhame, with words disjointed with my groans. Hold, Madam! cried I, you don't know to whom you ſpeak; nor who it is to whom you expreſs ſuch goodneſs. I believe it is I who am your enemy: it is I that am the cauſe of all your uneaſineſs.

How, Marianne! replied ſhe, aſtoniſhed: You ſhe, that Valville met and carried home? Yes, Madam, it was I myſelf, I returned; I am not ungrateful enough to hide it from you; this would be a frightful treachery, a monſtrous baſeneſs, after all the care you have taken of me; —— you ſee I have not merited ſo much kindneſs from you; ſince you would have been happier if you had never known me, or I had never been born. See what reaſon you have to abandon me. It is not natural that you ſhould preſerve the character of a mother to an orphan—an unknown orphan, who has taught your ſon to diſobey you. I am confuſed and aſhamed to think how much you have loved me.——You ſhould rather have hated and deſpiſed me. Alas! how much have you been deceived! I ſincerely beg your pardon.

My tears continued flowing, while my benefactreſs made me no anſwer; but looked upon me with an air of the moſt moving tenderneſs, when her friend reſumed, Madam, ſaid ſhe drying her eyes, this child touches me extremely: I am ſurprized at what ſhe has told you. What a great ſoul! Mrs. de Valvillé ſtill remained ſilent, regarding me attentively; which this amiable lady obſerving, ſhall I tell you my thoughts, Madam, reſumed ſhe; I put myſelf in your place, and can't help fancying that notwithſtanding you have a moſt compaſſionate and generous ſoul, you may poſſibly, after this event, feel ſome diſlike againſt ſeeing her again, and continuing her under your care. Come give her to me. I will provide for her till this affair is concluded. I don't intend to take her from you; ſhe would loſe too much by that; but will return her to you again as ſoon as the marriage ſhall be concluded. At this diſcourſe I lifted up my eyes, and gave her a look of humility and gratitude, to which I joined a ſlight inclination of my head. I ſay ſlight, becauſe I imagined I ought to thank her with diſcretion. I had reaſon to expreſs myſelf ſenſible of her goodneſs; but not to make her think that ſhe gave me any conſolation, as indeed ſhe did not. I accompanied this with a ſigh: after which Mrs. Dorſin reſuming her diſcourſe, ſaid to my benefactreſs: think of it Madam, and conſult with yourſelf. Excuſe me for a moment returned Mrs. de Valville, I will anſwer you preſently: let me firſt inform myſelf of one thing. Marianne, ſaid ſhe, have you not heard of my ſon ſince you have been here? ——— Alas! Madam, anſwered I, don't examine me on that head; I am ſo unhappy, that I can only give you freſh cauſe for grief, and therefore make you more exaſperated againſt me. It is juſt that you ſhould deprive

deprive me of your friendſhip, and leave an unhappy girl, who has the misfortune to be an obſtacle to your deſires. It would be of no ſervice to you to increaſe your hatred, which above all things I deſire to avoid. But, Madam, don't think I refuſe to tell you the truth: I know very well that I am oblig'd to tell it you, if you deſire it; this is the leaſt part of what I owe you; but what withholds me is the pain it will give you; the averſion it will inſpire you with, and all the affliction that your diſpleaſure will occaſion me. No, child, no reply'd Mrs. de Valville, ſpeak boldly, and fear nothing from me. Does my ſon know where you are? Has he been here?

THESE queſtions redoubled my tears. I drew the letter I had received from Valville out of my pocket, which I had not unſealed, and gave it her with a trembling hand.——I don't know, ſaid I, interrupted with ſighs, how he diſcovered that I am here; but ſee what he has juſt given me himſelf. She took it with a ſigh, opened it, run it over, then caſt her eyes upon her friend, who alſo fix'd her's upon her. They ſtood for ſome time looking upon each other, without ſpeaking a word. I thought I even ſaw them ſhed ſome tears. At laſt, Mrs. Dorſin ſhaking her head, Ah! Madam, ſaid ſhe, I aſked you for Marianne, but I ſhall not have her; I find you will keep her yourſelf. Yes, ſhe is my child more than ever, returned ſhe, with a tenderneſs that would not permit her ſaying any more, and immediately preſenting me her hand, which I took hold of as well as the grate would permit, and kiſs'd it on my knees for a long time with an inexpreſſible eagerneſs, whilſt I was ſo ſoftened, that I ſeemed almoſt ſuffocated with my tears. This was followed by a ſhort ſilence, which was ſo affecting,

fecting, that I can't yet think of it, without feeling myſelf moved from the bottom of my ſoul.

MRS. Dorſin broke ſilence firſt, is there no way for me to embrace her, ſaid this amiable lady? I never was ſo affected in my life as I am now. I don't know which of the two I love moſt, the mother or the daughter. Well, Marianne, ſaid Mrs. de Valville, (when the various agitations of our minds began to ſubſide) you muſt never more, whilſt I live, call yourſelf an orphan. But let us return to my ſon. Without doubt it was Mrs. du Tour the linnen-draper, that told him where you are. Very likely, returned I; I did not however tell her, becauſe I was ignorant of the name of the convent when I entered; but the porter I made uſe of to bring my clothes hither, plies near her houſe, and he might inform her: And then Mr. de Valville, who had me followed by his footman, till I was ſet down by the coach at Mrs. du Tour's, has without doubt enquired of the good woman, who could not help telling him all ſhe knew; this I believe is the way he found me out! for my part, I have done nothing to reproach myſelf with; and have not at all contributed to what has happened; and as a proof of this, ſince I have been here, I have not heard his name mentioned till this afternoon, when he brought me that letter, which he could not have given me without a ſtratagem.

I HAD no ſooner ſpoke, but I thought that I ought rather to have concealed this laſt article, which I had mentioned without conſidering at all the conſequence. This was engaging my benefactreſs to aſk an explication, and the diſguiſe of her ſon was a particular, that I might perhaps have concealed, without a breach of that ſincerity and truth, for which I began to value myſelf; an indiſcretion

diſcretion that my exceſſive ingenuity had drawn me into. However the word was ſpoke, but I found Mrs. de Valville did not at all need an explanation: ſhe knew at once what was meant by it.

A STRATAGEM! returned ſhe, I know what you mean, and I will tell you how. As I was ſtepping out of the coach, I ſaw by chance a young man in a livery, coming down from this parlour; methought he was ſo like my ſon, that I could not help being ſtruck with the reſemblance; I thought of telling you of it, Madam, for I look'd upon it as a thing pretty ſingular, tho' I did not give much attention to it. But, now, Marianne, I find my ſon loves you, I don't doubt but inſtead of a man that reſembles him, it was he himſelf. Was it not? Yes, Madam, returned I, after having heſitated a moment, ſcarce was he here before you arrived. I took his letter, without taking notice who it was that gave it me; and I ſhould not have known him, but for a look he caſt at me: I ſtarted with ſurpriſe: we were told you were coming, and he retired with precipitation.

By what I know of his temper, ſaid Mrs. de Valville, ſpeaking to her friend, Marianne muſt have made a prodigious impreſſion upon his heart. See what it has made him reſolve! what a ſurpriſing effect! to take a livery! Yes, returned Mrs. Dorſin, this action ſufficiently proves that he loves her paſſionately; yet here are charms which conclude it much more ſtrongly. But how muſt we act with reſpect to this marriage, which he has almoſt broke off, tho' he himſelf before approved of it, replied my benefactreſs? Valville will, I am afraid, never conclude it. For poſſeſs'd with ſuch a paſſion as this appears to be, I am afraid he will

marry

marry this child. Oh! what muſt we do to cure him of this paſſion? It will be difficult to teach him to overcome it, returned Mrs. Dorſin; but I believe we may reduce it into the bounds of reaſon, with miſs's aſſiſtance. It is a happineſs that ſhe is the perſon we have to do with. We have now ſeen an inſtance of the greatneſs of her mind, which proves what her gratitude and tenderneſs for ſuch a mother as you will render her capable of. Now to determine your ſon to fulfil his engagements, he can only be prevailed upon by your daughter, and this would be a procedure intirely worthy of herſelf. As ſhe is the only obſtacle, ſhe ſhould ſpeak to him herſelf; for no body elſe will be capable of making him hear reaſon. I am perſuaded, Madam, that he would obey you, if you inſiſted upon it; he reſpects you too much to be capable of rebelling againſt you: but you ſay, you will not force him; and nothing can be more juſt than this reſolution; for by a contrary conduct you would certainly render him unhappy; he would be made ſo out of complaiſance and duty to you; and conſequently conſider you as the cauſe of a miſery he might eaſily have avoided. On the contrary, Marianne, by a thouſand reaſons that will not admit of a reply, may poſſibly prevail with him to conſent to his former engagements; ſhe may perſuade him, in as ſweet and gentle terms as poſſible, and even with the appearance of regret, that he will love her in vain, ſince ſhe is not in a condition to return his affection; and by this means calm his heart, and convince him of the neceſſity he is under to marry the lady intended for him. Thus he would be induced to marry her, without your appearing to influence his choice. This is my opinion of the matter.

It is a very good thought, return'd Mrs. de Valville, I like your advice extremely: but would it not be proper, in order to take away all hopes from him, that ſhe ſhould pretend to be deſirous of taking the veil, and even to let him know, that her ſituation will not admit of her taking any other courſe? But, Marianne, added ſhe, interrupting herſelf, I would not have you concern'd at what I ſay; don't think I inſinuate that you ought to quit the world: I am ſo far from it, that I could not conſent to it, without the moſt viſible and remarkable proofs of your being deſirous of it; ſince I ſhould be apt to fear that your ſmall fortune, your apprehenſions of future want, or the fear of being a charge to me, would be your prevailing inducement. I would not have you miſtake me, I ſay; I have nothing but my ſon in view, and would only point out the means to bring him to my purpoſe, and help him to ſurmount a love, which you too well juſtify, in which I know he would think himſelf happy, if permitted to cheriſh it; and which indeed I myſelf ſhould be charm'd with, if the maxims of the world did not reſtrain me from acquieſcing with it. For alas! what is it you want? neither beauty with all its pleaſing graces, the moſt ſparkling wit, nor the unaffected goodneſs of a great and upright ſoul. Theſe are endowments the moſt extraordinary, the moſt precious. Theſe the true riches, the nobleſt portion of a woman in marriage, and theſe you enjoy in the greateſt profuſion; but you have not twenty thouſand livres a year: he would make no alliances in marrying you: nor do we know your relations, who perhaps would be an honour to us. The greateſt part of mankind, my dear, have a ſuperficial way of thinking, and conſequently very falſe ideas; they are dazzled with the ſplendor of riches,

riches, and their ears tickled with the ſound of titles; and yet to theſe I muſt give account of my actions; to theſe who would never pardon the misfortunes you have ſuffered, which they would falſly term defects. Reaſon would certainly chuſe you for his wife, but an extravagant cuſtom rejects you. Theſe particulars my friendſhip induces me to mention, that you might not look upon the aſſiſtance I expect from you as a painful ſubject of humiliation.

Oh dear Madam! or rather dear mamma, ſince you are pleaſed to grant me leave to call you ſo, how good! how generous is this! cried I, caſting myſelf at her feet, to have ſo much regard and delicacy for a poor girl, unworthy ſuch goodneſs, and whom any body elſe in the ſame circumſtances would have treated with contempt, and loaded with indignities! what would have become of me, had not you taken me into your care? without you, I ſhould by this time have had the confuſion of begging my bread: and notwithſtanding this, you are afraid of humbling me! ſure there is not a heart like yours in the world! Oh! my daughter, cried ſhe in her turn, who could help being tender-hearted to thee? My dear child, you enchant me!——O ſhe enchants you at a very proper time, ſaid Mrs. Dorſin, with a tender ſmile; but pray put an end to this diſcourſe, I can't bear it; you ſoften me too much.

Let us return then to what we were ſaying, replied my charming benefactreſs. Since we have concluded that you ſhall ſpeak to Valville, ſhall we wait till he returns to ſee her; or to be more expeditious, would it not be better that ſhe ſhould write to him to come? O by all means, returned Mrs. Dorſin, let her write; but I am of opinion that ſhe ſhould know firſt what he ſays to her in

that

that letter in your hand, which we have only read to ourſelves. By that ſhe will judge better how to regulate her conduct towards him. Yes, ſaid I, with an air of frankneſs and ſimplicity, I ought to know what he thinks, eſpecially ſince I wrote to him the day I came hither, about an hour before I entered. Ay! how ſo, Marianne? interrupted Mrs. de Valville.

I WAS obliged to it, Madam, returned I. I ſent to him a bundle, in which was a gown, ſome linen, and money, the preſents I had received from the gentleman I have already mentioned, who out of a ſeeming pity had placed me at Mrs. du Tour's, but whoſe real deſigns were baſe and diſhonourable. I writ to Mr. de Valville, who knew where he lived, to deſire him to be ſo good as to ſend him the parcel as from me. Hah! by what chance, ſaid Mrs. de Valville, did my ſon know this gentleman? Madam, you will be ſtill more ſurprized, returned I, when I tell you he knew him becauſe he was uncle. What! cried ſhe, Mr. de Climal? Yes, Madam, 'twas he himſelf, replied I. It was to him the good monk, I have mentioned, carried me, and at your houſe I learn'd it was Mr. de Valville's uncle, becauſe he enter'd ſoon after my fall had induced your ſon to have me carried in; and it was he too that young gentleman ſurpriſed at my feet at the linen-draper's, in the inſtant he was entertaining me with his love; and it was this diſcovery that made him propoſe to remove me from the neighbourhood of Mr. de Valville, that he might ſee me in ſecret without the dread of a diſcovery. Juſt heaven! cried ſhe; what do you tell me? What a weakneſs was this in my brother! Dear Madam, ſaid ſhe to her friend, don't mention a word of what you have heard. If ever an adventure

like this ſhould come to be known, judge of the ſcandal it would be to my brother, who paſſes for a man of great piety, and who, I hope, has hitherto deſerved it; however, he has forgotten himſelf, and behav'd ill in this inſtance. Poor man, what muſt he think of himſelf! how will he be able to reflect on this incident in his cool and ſecret moments! Well, let us leave him, and proceed to the thing in queſtion: let us ſee my ſon's letter. Here ſhe opened it again: but, ſaid ſhe, ſtopping ſhort and recollecting herſelf, I have a ſcruple that has ſtarted in my mind; ſhall we do well to read it to Marianne; perhaps ſhe loves Valville? There is a great deal of tenderneſs expreſſed in it, ſhe may be touched with it; and it would only coſt her more pain, to render us the ſervice we require from her. Tell us, my dear child, is there any hazard? what muſt we think? do you love my ſon? that don't ſignify, Madam, anſwer'd I, it will not hinder me from ſpeaking to him as I ought. It don't ſignify! ſay you? you love him then, child, return'd ſhe, ſmiling. Yes, Madam, ſaid I, 'tis true I do. I at firſt ſight conceived an inclination for him, without knowing it was love: I did not think myſelf in danger of feeling that paſſion, but only indulged the pleaſure of looking at him: I thought him amiable, and you know I could not be to blame in thinking him ſo, ſince I only did him juſtice. He is a young man of ſuch a graceful appearance, ſo perfectly agreeable, and ſo like you, Madam, for you know I loved you at firſt ſight, that I could not help being charmed with him. At this they both burſt into a laughter. I could never be weary of hearing her, ſaid Mrs. Dorſin, and I ſhall not be able to avoid ſeeing her; ſure there is not her equal. I think ſo too, replied my benefactreſs, but however

ever I ſhall chide her, for having told my ſon that ſhe loves him, for ſuch a conduct is very imprudent.

O DEAR Madam, I never told him ſo, rejoin'd I, I never utter'd a word like it. Dare a girl tell a man that ſhe loves him? we may talk of ſuch things amongſt ourſelves, becauſe no ill conſequence can attend it. But he has not the leaſt ſuſpicion of it, unleſs he has gueſſed ſo; and if he has, it will avail him nothing. It is true, he is amiable, and one muſt be blind not to obſerve it: but what then, I aſſure you I will behave as if he was entirely indifferent to me; for I ſhould be very ungrateful to act otherwiſe. Oh, my child, ſaid my amiable friend, it will be very difficult to bring that heart to reſolve to renounce him. The more I ſee thee, the more I deſpair of your ever being able to accompliſh it. Let us try however, ſee there what he writes to thee.

THE letter was ſhort, and as near as I can remember theſe were the words:

"IT is now three weeks, Madam, that I have "ſought you and been dying with grief.——— "I mention no more my love, it deſerves "no longer your attention: I would only throw "myſelf at your feet, to ſhew you the affliction "I am in for having offended you: I aſk pardon, "not with the hope of obtaining it, but to give "you an opportunity of revenge by refuſing "it me. You do not know how much you are "able to puniſh me: but you ought to know "it: and I only beg the conſolation of telling it "you."

THIS was pretty near the contents of the letter: it penetrated my ſoul, and my heart felt the force of every word, which I am perſuaded

Mrs. de Valville took notice of, for ſhe watched my looks attentively. My dear, ſaid ſhe, the note is very moving, is it not? I cannot deny it, Madam, for I durſt not deceive you, returned I. However, fear nothing; I ſhall not do my duty with the leſs courage. But, replied ſhe, what offence is it that he ſpeaks of? It is the ill opinion, returned I, he had expreſſed of me, when he found Mr. de Climal at my feet: but ſince he received my letter, where I begged him to ſend the bundle of clothes to his uncle, he ſees he has been deceived, acknowledges my innocence, and is conſcious of his having injured me.

THIS, ſaid Mrs. Dorſin, is as ſtrong a proof of his probity as his love. I am glad to ſee him do juſtice to Marianne's virtue. It is acting like an honeſt man; but the more he eſteems your daughter, the greater will be the difficulty ſhe will meet with in bringing him to reaſon. Do not you think ſo? You are in the right, anſwered my benefactreſs: but it is time to go home; let us conclude upon ſomething. We have agreed that Marianne ſhall write to Valville. A word or two, ſaid I, will be ſufficient; and I will write before you go, Madam, the pen and ink are in this parlour. Very well, child, you are in the right, replied ſhe, a line will be ſufficient. I immediately wrote as follows:

"I COULD not ſpeak to you this afternoon, "Sir, though I have ſomething to ſay to you."

BUT, Madam, when ſhall I deſire him to come? ſaid I to Mrs. de Valville. At eleven o'clock in the morning, returned ſhe.

"AND I ſhall be obliged to you," added I, writing again, "if you will come here to-morrow

"morn-

"morning at eleven o'clock; when I ſhall wait "for you. I am, &c." and at the bottom only Marianne.

AFTER I had directed this letter, I gave it my benefactreſs, who took the charge of ſealing and ſending it by one of the ſervants of the convent. Farewell, Marianne, till to-morrow, ſaid ſhe, when I ſhall ſee you again. My dear, cried Mrs. Dorſin, with an engaging ſmile, think me your ſincere friend; I ſhall ſee you again very ſoon.—I will have her come with you, Madam, and dine at my houſe; and if you don't bring her with you, I promiſe you, I will come and fetch her myſelf.———We will both wait upon you the firſt opportunity, replied Mrs. de Valville, after which you ſhall have her as often as you pleaſe. I made no anſwer to this, but a ſmile, and a low courteſy, after which they went away and left me with a mind ſerene and full of tranquility. Whoever had ſeen me, would have imagined that I was dull and melancholy; but I was far from being ſo; I had only the appearance of this diſorder, which was the effect of that flood of ſoftneſs which had juſt overwhelmed me. I ſigh'd, however, like a perſon whoſe mind was diſturbed, and might perhaps be thought to have ſome reaſon for being ſo, on account of the diſpoſition of my affairs; for I loved a man whom I muſt think on no more, and this ſurely was a reaſonable ſubject of grief; but on the other hand, he tenderly loved me in return; a reflection full of unnumbered charms: this alone was almoſt ſufficient to diſſipate my uneaſineſs; it was a true honour, eſſentially neceſſary to give me patience to ſupport the reſt. Beſides I had juſt behaved with ſo much generoſity, had acted ſo conformably to reaſon, and given ſuch proof of a diſ-

tereſted gratitude, that had drawn tears of admiration and pleaſure from thoſe two amiable ladies. I looked inward with complacency and delight; I approved the greatneſs of my own ſoul: and amuſed with the ſecret applauſe which ſprung from every reflection the gloom diſſipated, and all within appear'd bright and lovely.

But to proceed, he has told me ſince, that the freedom I took in writing to him, diſquieted him extremely; and indeed it could give him but poor encouragement: there was nothing in it that had the air of an intrigue, and it appeared too innocent to promiſe any thing very favourable. But however this was, eleven o'clock was but juſt ſtruck, when the abbeſs came herſelf to tell me Valville waited for me. Go, Marianne, ſaid ſhe, Mrs. de Valville's ſon aſks for you. She told me yeſterday after ſhe left you, that ſhe would ſend him to ſee you; he waits for you.

My heart began to flutter when I heard he was there: I thank you, Madam, ſaid I, I am going. I went immediately, but with a ſlow pace, to get time to recover and fortify myſelf. I was entering upon a painful ſcene, and feared I ſhould want courage to go through; I diſtruſted myſelf, and was apprehenſive that my heart would betray me, and make me but poorly ſerve my benefactreſs.

I forgot to mention one article, Madam, which gave me, on reflection, another ſubject of ſelf-approbation. I endeavoured to diveſt myſelf of every charm that it was poſſible for me to lay aſide. I appeared in no other dreſs than what I commonly wore on mornings, which I had put on as negligently as I could: my linen, though very fine, was the ſame I had laid in, and was conſequently tumbled: my gown was a very indifferent one,

it

it was very old, and what I ſeldom wore out of my chamber. Thus my age, and my natural agreeableneſs were all that remained, without the aſſiſtance of the leaſt art to recommend them: However, I flattered myſelf with the thought that of theſe I could not be ſtripped, which helped me to ſupport the abandoning ever other ornament; a ſacrifice I freely made to the friendſhip of my deareſt friend. She indeed deſired me to be dreſſed; but I was very ſenſible that it would not have pleaſed her, if ſhe had found I had been ſo.

Thus clothed I appeared before Valville, who was dreſſed and appeared extremely genteel; but with what a tender and reſpectful air! What a deſire of pleaſing ſhone in his eyes! he held a letter in his hand, which was mine, in which I had invited him to come. I don't know, ſaid he, ſhewing me the letter, which he kiſſed, whether I ought to rejoice or be afflicted at the order I have here received from you: but I have not obeyed it without an inexpreſſible inquietude. This he ſpoke with a look expreſſive of the greateſt fear and uncertainty. Sir, returned I, extremely touched at this tender introduction to his diſcourſe, pray ſit down. Here I heſitated in order to recover myſelf, whilſt he took a chair. Yes, Sir, reſumed I, with a trembling voice, I want to talk with you. —Well, Miſs, returned he, trembling too, what is the matter? What muſt I think of this interview? Your abbeſs, I believe, knows of my making you this viſit. Yes, Sir, ſaid I, ſhe herſelf calling you by your name, came to tell me that you deſired to ſpeak with me.———My name! cried he, how can that be? I do not know her; nor have I ever ſeen her: you muſt have told her who I was: you have then had her conſent for ſending for me.———No, Sir, I have not made

her my confidante; all that she knew was that you were to be here; however it was not I that informed her of it: but, Sir, I beg you would hear me. You would persuade me to think you love me, and I believe it is true that you do; but what design can you have in loving me? That of being only your's, returned he seriously, with a firm and resolute tone; that of being united to you by all the ties of honour and religion: and if there are any engagements more strong and binding, I will enter into them with a proportionably greater pleasure. Your enquiry into my design gives me no pain, for I don't see, Miss, how it is possible for a man to love you with other views. My intentions will not bear a doubt: I desire only to know if they are agreeable to you; and if I may hope to obtain what will be the happiness of my life?

How affecting was this discourse, Madam! I perceived the tears flow to my eyes. A sigh escaped me, without being able to suppress it; but it was as low as possible: mean while I durst not lift up my eyes to give him one look. Sir, said I, you know not yet the misfortunes I have suffered from my infancy: I am ignorant to whom I owe my birth; I lost my parents without knowing them; and I have neither fortune nor relation; we are not made for each other; besides there are insurmountable obstacles in our way. I understand you, returned he, with an air of despair and consternation: Your heart refuses to yield to my desires, and unite itself to mine. No, Sir, you are mistaken, that is far from being the case, cried I, without being able to proceed.——That is not the case, Miss, returned he; why then do you mention obstacles?——

We were in this part of our conversation when my benefactress entered. Judge then of Valville's surprise. What!

WHAT! my mother! cried he riſing: Oh, Miſs, all this was contrived. Yes, my ſon, ſaid ſhe to him, with a tone full of the ſweeteſt tenderneſs, it was, I readily confeſs it; we would not endeavour to conceal it from you: I knew you were to be here, and we thought it proper I ſhould meet you. But, my dear child, added ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to me, have you informed Valville of every thing? No, Madam, ſaid I, fortified by her preſence, and animated by the affectionate manner in which ſhe ſpoke to me; no, I have not had time. The gentleman is but juſt come, and our converſation was hardly begun when you entered; but I will tell him every thing before you, Madam. You ſee, Sir, ſaid I to Valville, who ſeemed ſurpriſed at the tender names we gave each other, you ſee in what manner Mrs. de Valville treats me: you ought to know how kind, how extremely kind, ſhe has been to me; and what obligations I am under to her: obligations ſo great and numerous, that were I to mention them, they would appear quite incredible; and you would be the firſt that would tell me, that I ſhould be unworthy to live, if I did not intreat you to think of me no more.

VALVILLE at theſe words held down his head and ſighed. Do you be judge, reſumed I; you need only conſider who I am. I have already told you I loſt my father and mother, who were aſſaſſinated on a journey when I was with them, and but two years old; and ſince that time, Sir, hear what has happened to me. My education was given me by a clergyman in the country, who fulfilled that taſk out of a noble compaſſion. His ſiſter brought me to Paris; here ſhe died, and left me alone without ſupport. Her confeſſor preſented me to your uncle, who placed me at a linen-dra-

per's; but after a few days abandoned me. I have already told you the reaſons of his conduct, when I deſired you to return his preſents for me. I went to tell the monk my ſituation, and in returning from him I entered into the church that belongs to our convent, to dry up my tears, with which I was almoſt ſuffocated. My dear mamma here came in after me; ſhe ſaw me weep at a confeſſional: I excited her pity, and from that time became a boarder here; 'tis ſhe who pays all my expences; who has bought me clothes; who has furniſhed me with every thing, not only in the greateſt plenty, but magnificence; and has accompanied theſe generous actions, with ſuch an engaging ſweetneſs, ſuch tender and affectionate endearments, that I can't call them to mind without melting into tears of gratitude and affection. She comes to ſee and diſcourſe with me; ſhe loves me, and treats me as if I was your ſiſter; ſhe has even made me forget that I am an orphan; and with reaſon too: I ought not to think I am ſo, ſince it is no longer true. Never had a daughter a better mother; nor experienced ſuch happineſs from that dear relation. My benefactreſs and her ſon, at this part of my diſcourſe, ſeemed moved even to tears.

SEE the ſituation I am in, continued I, ſee what I owe to Mrs. de Valville. You, I have been told, have ſenſe and probity; I believe it true; ſpeak then from your conſcience, Sir, how would you adviſe me to act after what I have told you? you muſt think that thoſe unhappy wretches who beg their bread, are not ſo poor as I am: they have at leaſt brothers and ſiſters, or ſome other relations; they have a country; they have a name to diſtinguiſh them from the reſt of mankind, by which they are known amongſt their acquaintance: but

but I have none even of theſe advantages; and, therefore, am more wretched and more poor than they.

Come, dear child, pray forbear, here is enough on this ſubject, ſaid Mrs. de Valville: No, mother, let me tell every thing; I ſay nothing but the truth, Sir, continued I; and yet after all this you ask for my heart; you deſire to marry me; would it not be a fine preſent I ſhould make you? would it not be a cruelty even to myſelf? Oh! what a heart ſhould I give you, if that gift would declare my want of gratitude, my want of conſideration, and regard for you. 'Tis true, I am agreeable to you; but you would not attach yourſelf to me ſure, for no other reaſon but becauſe you think me handſome: you certainly believe I have a ſpotleſs character; and if this is the caſe, how can you hope that I ſhould ever conſent to a love, that would draw upon you the cenſure of the world; which would ſet you at variance with your family, with your friends, with every one who eſteems you, and even with me too; for how ſevere muſt be your repentance, when you would ceaſe to love me; when you would find yourſelf married to a woman, who is the ſubject of public ridicule; whom no body would ſee; and who would only bring upon you ſhame and miſery. Is this nothing added I, with a tenderneſs that made me weep? But obliged as I am to Mrs. de Valville, how wicked a creature muſt I be, ſhould I marry you! if I was capable of it, would you ever think upon me but with horror? Should I not be the baſeſt and moſt ungrateful creature upon earth, eſpecially as I know your engagements to a lady of great merit?——— Don't be ſurprized, Sir, I am informed of every thing. My mamma came to ſee me yeſterday as

uſual; ſhe appeared ſad and dejected; I aſked the cauſe; ſhe informed me that her ſon had diſpleaſed her; I heard her with attention, without knowing that I was the cauſe of her uneaſineſs. She told me, ſhe had the greateſt reaſon to be ſatisfied with your conduct, till you had ſeen a young girl: here ſhe related our hiſtory. And the girl who diſturbs you; who induces you to break your word; who now afflicts this dear lady; and who has robbed her of the reſpect and tenderneſs of her ſon, I found to be me, Sir; me, the penſioner that ſhe ſupports and loads with kindneſs. After this, Sir, ſee if with honour, with probity, with a worthy, tender, and generous heart, which you have been accuſtomed to preſerve; ſee, I ſay, if you can wiſh me to love you, and if you yourſelf could have the courage to love ſuch a monſter as I ſhould be, could I liſten to your paſſion: No, certainly. I find you are touched, Sir, with what I tell you: You weep, it is tenderneſs ſurely for my mamma, and pity for me. Oh! Madam, you ſhall be no longer full of ſadneſs and inquietude. Mr. de Valville will ſuffer me to be no more the ſubject of your uneaſineſs; the ſubject of a pain that falls with double weight upon myſelf. I am ſure he will no more interrupt the pleaſure you take in ſuccouring me; on the contrary, he will be ſenſible that he muſt ſhare in it: he may love me ſtill, but it muſt be a paſſion like yours; he will marry the lady in queſtion; he will marry her on his own account, becauſe he owes it to himſelf; on yours, who have procured ſo advantageous a match, and one ſo proper to compleat his happineſs; and on mine too, who entreat him to obey you, as the only proof he can give me that I have been ever dear to him. This is a ſatisfaction that he will not refuſe to a girl that cannot be his; but

but will never be any body's elſe; and who for her part, will not ſcruple to tell him, that if ſhe had been rich and his equal ſhe has ſo good an opinion of his merit, that ſhe would chuſe him before any other man in the world. This is a conſolation that I am willing to give you, Sir, and which I ſhall not regret, provided it reſtores your content and peace.

HERE I ſtopped, and wiped away the tears which began to flow in abundance, while Valville all this while held down his head, and plunged in deep thought, was ſome time without anſwering me. Mrs. de Valville fixed her looks upon him, while I ſpoke, with eyes ſwimming in tears: At laſt he broke ſilence, addreſſing himſelf to my benefactreſs. You ſee, Madam, what is the object of my regard; put yourſelf in my place:——Am I to blame to love her? is it poſſible I ſhould ceaſe to do it? can what ſhe has juſt urged diſengage my affections? O Madam, what a conſummate virtue! but I muſt reſign her: you will have me do it: ſhe too deſires it of me, and I will quit the dear invaluable treaſure. I will marry another: I conſent to be miſerable; but I ſhall not be ſo long.

HERE his tears broke looſe, and he no longer endeavoured to reſtrain them. Mrs. de Valville was touched with them, and wept as faſt as he without knowing what to ſay. We all three were ſilent, and nothing was heard but ſighs.

AT laſt, agitated with love, grief, and a thouſand confuſed emotions, not to be deſcribed; I cried out, Oh, dear Madam, your grief is inſupportable to me: why did you meet us? you fill me with deſpair; I cannot bear to ſee you thus; Sir, you make my life quite inſupportable.——Why, my dear, do you complain? ſaid Valville,

Valville, have I not already told you that I will reſign you? Yes, you will leave me, returned I, but tho' you ſay ſo, you afflict my mamma; you deprive her of life; you threaten her with your being miſerable: Is this the conſolation, this the happineſs you give her? you aſk what reaſon we have for complaint; what can you demand more than I have granted? if you are generous, if you are reaſonable, ought you not to regulate your deſires, and keep them within proper bounds? you cannot marry me; but you ſhall have this conſolation, that I will never engage my affections to any other; you will be always very dear to me, Sir. You will not loſe me, nor ſhall I loſe you; I ſhall be a nun indeed, but it will be here at Paris, and we ſhall ſometimes ſee each other. We have both the ſame mother, you ſhall be my brother, my benefactor, and my deareſt friend; the only man I eſteem, and whom I ſhall never forget. Oh! my dear mother, cried Valville again, throwing himſelf ſuddenly at her feet; I beg pardon for the tears which I am ſo unhappy as to draw from you. Do with me what you pleaſe: you are the miſtreſs of my actions; but you have undone me. Why did you bring me here to raiſe my admiration, for this dear, this juſtly dear, creature? and then to ſnatch me from her for ever. ——Oh 'tis too much! have pity on my condition; you tear my heart with the moſt cruel anguiſh.——Take me away——let us go——I had rather die than afflict you thus——but think for a moment what will become of me. Alas! my ſon! what would you have me ſay? returned the lady. I pity thee, child; I excuſe thee; you both touch me; and I confeſs to you that I love Marianne as much as you do. Ariſe, my ſon, this has not ſucceeded according to my expectations,

pectations, but is is not her fault: I forgive the love thou haſt for her! and if the world thought as I do, I ſhould not be ſo much troubled, nor at a loſs what to reſolve upon.

AT theſe laſt words, which Valville at once put the moſt favourable conſtruction upon, he caſt himſelf again at her feet, from whence ſhe had juſt raiſed him; and taking one of her hands, kiſs'd it for a long time, without ſpeaking. Well, Madam, ſaid I, will you love me ſtill? Will you not after this, as the only remedy, abandon me? Heaven forbid, my dear child, returned ſhe: why do you talk thus? come, I deſire you would compoſe yourſelf. I am ſatisfied with you, my ſon, added ſhe, with an air of goodneſs that tranſported me: I will not preſs you to conclude the marriage in queſtion; though it will diſpleaſe a very worthy family. You reſtore me to life, returned Valville, I am the happieſt of all ſons. But, Madam, what will you do with Marianne? won't you ſometimes permit me to ſee her? You aſk more than I know how to anſwer, returned ſhe: let me think of it: we ſhall ſee——Conſent at leaſt that I love her, added he——what would ſignify my refuſing you that, returned ſhe? love her, child, love her, let what will happen.

I HAD ſaid ſometime before, that I would take the veil, and was here, out of an exceſs of zeal going to repeat it; but as my dear benefactreſs ſeem'd to have forgot it, I ſuddenly reflected, that I ought not to bring it to her remembrance. I had juſt exhauſted my generoſity, had uſed every argument I could think of to diſſuade Valville from loving me; but as his mother had now permitted him to do ſo; as we had melted her heart into ſuch ſoftneſs, it was only for me to be ſilent. It would not have been proper for me to ſay, Madam, take

care

care what you do: ſuch an exceſs of diſintereſtedneſs, would neither have appeared reaſonable nor natural. I therefore ſaid not a word.

AFTER a moment's pauſe, what a dangerous little creature thou art, Marianne, ſaid ſhe riſing: farewel. Let us go, Sir, added ſhe to her ſon, with an engaging ſweetneſs, who ſtill was kiſſing her hand, which he held in his; the reaſon of which ſhe ſeem'd perfectly to underſtand.——— Yes, yes, added ſhe, ſmiling, I know what all this means; but I can fix upon nothing yet, I can't bring myſelf to any reſolution. Adieu, child, it is late, I will return to ſee you very ſoon. I ſaluted her without making any anſwer, and as I had been crying, I was wiping my eyes with my handkerchief. Why do you cry, ſaid ſhe, I have nothing to reproach you with; I can't be angry with you for being amiable. Go compoſe yourſelf. Give me your hand Valville.

SHE immediately went down ſtairs aſſiſted by her ſon, who only ſpoke to me with his eyes, and took no other leave but a low bow; which I returned with an air full of diffidence, like a perſon afraid of taking too much liberty, and of abuſing that generous lady's indulgence.

HERE I was left alone, much more agitated than I was when Mrs. de Valville left me the preceding night; ſince here was matter for many other quite different emotions. *Love her child, let what will happen*, my dear benefactreſs had ſaid to her ſon; and then, *We ſhall ſee, I don't know what to reſolve upon*, had ſhe added: and from this I inferred, that ſhe had ordered me to hope; which indeed I did, but called myſelf a fool for daring to hope on ſuch ſlender grounds. On occaſions like theſe we can't help feeling a pretty deal of pain; for it is much better not to have the leaſt glimpſe

of

of ſucceſs, than to have one ſo faint as only to flatter the ſoul; to make it tremble with fear; and to fill it with the moſt painful uncertainty.—— Shall I be ſo happy as to marry Valville? ſaid I to myſelf; I cannot believe it poſſible: but, however, I began to think I ſhould be miſerable if I did not. This was all the knowledge that my heart had gained from the uncertain diſcourſe of Mrs. de Valville: I had learnt a new way to torment myſelf.

I COULD not ſleep that night, and hardly got any reſt the two following; for I paſſed three days without hearing any thing of them; but if I remember right, it was not without a little repining at my dear benefactreſs. What, can ſhe determine nothing then? ſaid I ſometimes; will ſhe never come to a reſolution? and here I believe I could not help blaming her. At laſt the fourth day appeared, and I heard nothing of her: but about three in the afternoon I was told that Valville aſked for me; and I had immediately leave granted to ſee him, which however I did not accept. I felt I loved him infinitely more than I had ever done; I had an extreme deſire to ſee him; and the greateſt curioſity imaginable to know if he had nothing new to tell me relating to our mutual paſſion; but in ſpite of all this I reſtrained myſelf: I refuſed to go to him; becauſe I was ſenſible that if Mrs. de Valville ſhould know it, it would add to her eſteem. Thus my refuſal was only a laudable piece of artifice: I then ſent word to Valville to excuſe my ſeeing him, except he came from his mother; and that I durſt not preſume to do it, ſince ſhe had not previouſly informed me of his viſit, as indeed ſhe had not.

VALVILLE durſt not deceive me, and was wiſe enough to retire. This prudent piece of conduct

coſt

coſt me very dear. I began to repent it, when he ſent me word he would come again the next day with his mother: this news was neceſſary to compoſe the painful perturbations of my mind.

THE next day we were to have a ceremony at our convent, when a young religious was to take her vows. You know, Madam, on theſe occaſions the nuns appear openly, and the curtain is drawn from the rails. Here was I ſeated when Mrs. de Valville entered the church, who with her family were invited by the young nun's relations. She came pretty late, and therefore went directly into the church. As I was ignorant of her being invited, I was agreeably ſurpriſed to ſee her coming up the iſle towards the rails, ſupported by an elderly gentleman of a good mien. A throng of people followed; but I did not take my eyes off of this lady, who did not yet ſee me; at laſt ſhe took her ſeat with the gentleman by her ſide. Then caſting a look on thoſe that followed, I perceived Mr. de Climal and Valville.

WHAT! Mr. de Climal! ſaid I to myſelf, with a mixture of aſtoniſhment and trouble. I could not help being ſorry to have him there, though I knew not whether his preſence would be of any conſequence to me or not: I looked upon him as a wicked man, whom my preſence was ſufficient to diſconcert. But this was nothing in compariſon of the painful and mortifying circumſtances that muſt attend his ſeeing me, which I apprehended would cover him with extreme confuſion. I only waited for Mrs. de Valville's ſeeing me, to pay her my reſpects; which I knew that engaging lady would return, with that eaſy, tender and obliging freedom, which was almoſt peculiar to herſelf. But what would he think of this familiarity? what dreadful conſequences, Madam, would he not in-

fer

fer from it? Imagine how detrimental it muſt appear to his reputation; and how much a villain that fears you, is himſelf to be feared. Theſe ideas gave me a confuſed kind of agitation. His nephew ſaw me firſt, and inſtantly ſaluted me with an undeſcribable air of gaity, and confidence, which ſeemed to preſage that our affairs were in a happy ſituation. Mr. de Climal, who was looking another way, did not ſee him, for he was ſpeaking to the gentleman that ſat by Mrs. de Valville. This lady attended to what they were ſaying, and had not yet looked to the ſide where we were. At laſt ſhe caſt her eyes upon us and perceived me. This look was return'd by a deep courteſy; which drew from her demonſtrations of friendſhip, which ſhe expreſſed by waving her hand, and an engaging ſmile of complacency. Her brother, who was pulling out of his pocket a kind of breviary, took notice of theſe ſigns, followed them with his eyes, and ſaw the little linen-draper, who did not appear to have loſt any thing by caſting him off; and whoſe dreſs was ſuch, as not to allow her to regret the bundle of clothes ſhe had ſent him back.

THIS poor man, (for the time is coming when I muſt ſoften my expreſſions for him,) this poor man, I ſay, to whom, by a kind of fatality, I was to be ever a ſubject of new alarms and embaraſſments, loſt all countenance at ſeeing me, and had not the confidence to look in my face. I in my turn bluſhed too; but like an enemy bold and diſpleaſed, who had the advantage of a good conſcience, and who could not but confound a guilty mind inferior to its own. I doubted whether he would ſalute me or not; but I found he avoided it, and I imitated him out of haughtineſs, prudence, and even a kind of pity for him; for I was at once actuated

actuated by all theſe various ſenſations. I obſerved Mrs. de Valville took notice of it, and I believe ſaw his diſorder, which the ſight of Valville too augmented. The ſervice began, and we had a ſermon, which, though a very fine one, was far from deſerving the character of a good one; a flow of ſenſeleſs periods ſtreamed from the preacher's lips, while the trickling nonſenſe was dreſſed in all the flowers of rhetoric. The prieſt ſeemed mightily delighted with his own eloquence, and diſplayed the greateſt vanity in declaiming againſt the vanity of all terreſtrial objects; a vice very common amongſt our clergy, who have leſs regard to the inſtruction of others than their own applauſe.

THE ceremony being finiſhed, Mrs. de Valville aſked for me, and came to the parlour with her ſon, while Mr. de Climal retired. How do you do, my dear? ſaid ſhe, I am only come to ſpeak a word to you; my company wait for me below, except my brother, who is gone. Here is Valville, who loves you with the utmoſt tenderneſs; he continually perſecutes me with his paſſion, and is perpetually on his knees before me, to obtain my conſent for the accompliſhment of his deſires. He tells me, I ſhall render him miſerable if I oppoſe his happineſs; that his paſſion is unſurmountable; that he muſt ever love and adore you, and make your felicity inſeparable from his own. I muſt ſurrender. I cannot ſincerely blame his choice; therefore love each other: I permit you to do it: any other mother, beſides me, would not ſuffer this. According to the maxims of the world, my ſon acts a very fooliſh part; and I ſhall not be reckoned more wiſe to ſuffer him to do ſo. But on this, he ſays, depends the repoſe and all the comfort of his whole life; and it muſt be

be a heart very different from mine that could reſiſt the force of ſuch an argument. I am perſuaded that Valville does not act contrary to true honour: that he only diſcards an eſtabliſhed cuſtom; tho' he injures his fortune by refuſing to augment it.——He aſſures me that he can't live without you. Nothing here oppoſes you but the prejudices of mankind: God nor reaſon don't do it. It is your buſineſs, Sir, added ſhe, turning to her ſon; you are of a conſiderable family; and as we don't know that of Marianne, pride and avarice oppoſe your marrying her; but you can only attend to the dictates of your paſſion. For my part I have neither pride nor avarice enough, to render me inexorable; I only can hear my tenderneſs; and you force me to it by the fear of rendering you miſerable. I muſt either act as thy tyrant or thy mother; but I chuſe, and ſhall always glory in being the latter. May heaven bleſs the motives that induce me to give my conſent; but whatever happens, I ſhould rather chuſe to blame my indulgence, than an inflexibility, which will be of no advantage to thee, and which might perhaps be attended with the moſt fatal conſequences.

VALVILLE, at this diſcourſe, wept with joy and gratitude. As for me, I was ſo affected, that it was impoſſible for me to pronounce a ſyllable; my hands trembled, and I only expreſſed my thoughts by ſhort and frequent ſighs. You ſay nothing, Marianne, ſaid this amiable lady; but I underſtand your ſilence; and indeed can't help being ſenſible of the joy I give you both. Heaven might have deſtined me a daughter in-law that would better pleaſe the world; but not one more agreeable to my own heart. Here I broke out into a ſudden tranſport; Oh my dear mamma, cried I, you kill me with this exceſs of affection; I ſhall never have

that

that gratitude and tenderneſs ſuch goodneſs demands. My tears forced me to ſtop here unable to proceed. I caſt my ſelf at her feet, and put ſome of my fingers through the rails to take hold of Mrs. de Valville's, who preſented hers; while Valville, loſt in joy, and as if beſide himſelf, ſeized both our hands and kiſſed them alternately.

HARK ye, my dear children, ſaid my charming benefactreſs, after having looked for ſome time with tranſport on her ſon; you muſt uſe ſome prudence on this occaſion. While you ſtay in this convent, Marianne, you muſt not expect Valville's coming to ſee you alone. You have related your hiſtory to the abbeſs: ſhe, ſuſpecting that my ſon loves you, and that I conſent to it, may tell the nuns, and they again may ſpeak of it to others, and this if poſſible I would avoid. Nor is it proper, Marianne, that you ſhould be long here: you ſhall ſtay but about three weeks or a month at fartheſt, mean time I will look out for a convent, where they will know none of the accidents of your life; there I will place you under a feigned name, while I take meaſures to prepare the minds of the people for the marriage, to prevent the ſurprize it might occaſion. You ought in the mean time to have a little addreſs, as well as patience, which you will readily conſent to, ſince you have me for your confidante.

VALVILLE upon this was going to renew his thanks, and I the teſtimonies of my reſpect and tenderneſs, but ſhe aroſe up. You know they wait for me, ſaid ſhe to her ſon. Conceal your joy, I will diſpenſe with your ſhewing it me, ſince I am ſenſible of what you feel: Come, let us go.

BUT, Madam, replied her ſon, you tell me that you will not permit me to ſee her without you;

you; does not that imply that I ſhall wait upon you ſometimes when you come here? Yes, yes, returned ſhe, to be ſure; two or three times, perhaps, but not more: Let me ſee, added ſhe, there is a difficulty that I did not think of; it is that as my brother knows Marianne, and where ſhe is, perhaps we ſhall be obliged to marry you privately. You are his heir, ſon, and for this reaſon you ſhould not diſoblige him. It is true, that after his adventure with Marianne, we may perhaps bring him over, and make him hear reaſon, and even conſult with him what part you ought to take. He loves me; and has ſome confidence in me; I will take advantage of it, and endeavour to manage him: but once more adieu.———After a tender ſalute ſhe left me, more tranſported than I can find words to deſcribe.

I HAVE already ſaid, that for three or four nights my inquietude would hardly permit my taking any repoſe; but now a contrary paſſion had the ſame effect: nothing keeps us ſo much awake as extreme joy, or the delightful expectation of a great happineſs; and ſince this was the caſe, judge if I was in a diſpoſition to ſleep. Imagine what tranſports filled my breaſt at the thought of marrying my dear Valville, and how my heart ſprung with the rapture, and then judge if with theſe violent emotions it was impoſſible for me to enjoy true repoſe. The two firſt days I was perfectly enchanted; but afterwards my ſatisfaction was daſhed with a mixture of impatience. Yes, I ſhall marry Valville, ſaid I to myſelf; my dear benefactreſs has promiſed it me; but when will this happy moment arrive? I am to ſtay a month longer here, and then be placed in another convent, that meaſures may be taken to bring about this marriage; but will not theſe meaſures draw

out

out the time to a great length? or ſhall I be united to Valville ſhortly? I cannot tell what to think: no time is fixed for it, and it is poſſible they may change their minds: and theſe thoughts extremely alleviated my ſatisfaction. Sometimes I ſuffered almoſt as much pain as from a real chagrin. I would have ſkipt over this ſpace of time, that appeared to creep on ſlowly, and have joined the preſent inſtant with that from whence I was to date my felicity. At laſt theſe various emotions began to diſſipate; the ſoul accuſtoms itſelf to its ſenſations; I began to be uſed to them, and grew familiar with my hopes and inquietudes. I was then full of tranquility. There had paſſed five or ſix days ſince I had ſeen my mamma or her ſon, when one morning a letter was brought me from my benefactreſs, in which ſhe informed me that ſhe would come at one o'clock with Valville to take me to dine with Mrs. Dorſin: And her note concluded with theſe words: "And eſpecially uſe all your "art, and neglect nothing in point of dreſs: Do "you mind? I would have you put on all your "charms." And you ſhall be obeyed, ſaid I to myſelf, when I had read this letter. I had a deſign to dreſs me before I had read her orders for it: but this command flattered my vanity; and I was ready to indulge ſomething of the coquet, and with the greateſt alacrity reſolved to obey her.

By coquetry, I would here be only underſtood to mean, that I would employ all my ſkill, in rendering myſelf as agreeable as poſſible: for the moſt perfect and exact decency in dreſs ought never to be diſpenſed with, and we ſhould always endeavour to adorn ourſelves modeſtly; ſince not only our natural prudence but ſelf-love demand it. When a woman ſhocks this native innocence, this eſſential delicacy of her ſex, ſhe loſes the advantage of all

all her charms: her groſs deſire of pleaſing is alone taken notice of: and thoſe graces, that would have been otherwiſe irreſiſtable, don't reach the heart: ſhe gives not that ſolid pleaſure which ariſes from a paſſion founded on eſteem; founded on virtue and conſcious honour, "which alone are truly "fair." In ſhort, ſhe only contributes to debauch and enervate the mind: and ſo far from rendering herſelf more amiable makes herſelf more diſtaſteful than the deformed and the ugly, if they have a greater regard to decency. It is true that with a wiſe and chaſte behaviour, ſhe will hear fewer encomiums on her beauty, fewer proteſtations of love: but her virtue would inſpire her admirers with awe, and an affection that fills the lover with diffidence; and though fewer would applaud her charms to her face, more would feel the effects of them, and would mention them if they durſt.

THIS reflection has flowed from my pen before I was aware; but happily it is ſhort, and I hope it will not diſpleaſe you. To proceed:

ELEVEN o'clock was ſtruck, and it was time for me to dreſs, in order to render myſelf compleatly agreeable, and aſſume the moſt engaging air; and as I had ſo good a deſign, I did not fear ſucceeding in it. This order methought was a proof that Mrs. de Valville perſiſted in giving me the heart of her ſon: if ſhe had heſitated upon it, ſhe would not have expoſed him thus to all my charms. Theſe were my thoughts while dreſſing, and the exquiſite pleaſure I felt in reflecting, that he would be ſenſible of the graces I put on, gave a freſh luſtre to my countenance, and more fire and vivacity to my eyes. At laſt I was ready; the clock ſtruck one; and while I waited for my benefactreſs, I amuſed myſelf with walking backwards and forwards in my room, and from time to time looking in my

glaſs to re-touch my head-dreſs; to which, though very well before, I could not help endeavouring to add ſomething improving.

At laſt my door opened; and I was told Mrs. de Valville waited for me: I went down and met her ſon at the gate of the convent, who conducted me to the coach, where I found my benefactreſs. I muſt not forget to tell you, that I paſſed by ſome of our lay-ſiſters as I went down from my chamber, who appeared ſurpriſed to ſee me look ſo well. O dear Miſs! how extremely handſome you are! cried they with a genuine ſimplicity that might be depended upon.

I perceived Valville was ready to entertain me with the ſame diſcourſe; but he refrained becauſe a ſervant was preſent; and only expreſſed himſelf by gently ſqueezing my hand; which I returned by a look expreſſive of more ſweetneſs than timidity. Mr. de Climal is not well, ſaid he in the way, he has had a ſlight fever theſe two or three days. I am ſorry for it, returned I: I bear him no ill-will: I hope it will not be attended with any bad conſequence: here we got to the coach. Come, my dear Marianne, ſaid my benefactreſs, let us make haſte, for it is very late. You look incomparably well to-day, ſaid ſhe, as ſoon as I was ſeated. Yes, Madam, ſaid Valville ſmiling, it is impoſſible to avoid being raviſhed at the ſight of ſo many graces as are united in this charming girl. But Marianne, returned Mrs. de Valville, you know we are going to dine with Mrs. Dorſin; and there will be a pretty deal of company; we have therefore reſolved that I ſhould introduce you as the daughter of one of my beſt friends, who died in the country, and recommended you to my care: remember this, child:——I ſhould have loved thy mother

mother had I known her; and I now think of her as a friend I have loſt.

DEAR Madam, returned I, extremely touched, forgive my want of expreſſion to thank you as I ought: Your goodneſs has daily increaſed ſince I have had the happineſs to be known to you; every word you have ſpoken has been a freſh benefit, and has laid me under a new obligation to you. Indeed, ſaid Valville, as there is no mother like ours, ſo it is not ſtrange that we can't tell her how much we love her. Yes, returned ſhe merrily, I believe you love me very well; but you coax me a little too. I am going to introduce you, child, rejoin'd ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to me, into the moſt choice and valuable company; they are all perſons of wit and good ſenſe. I won't direct you how to behave; you are unacquainted with the world, it is true, but that will not be any diſadvantage to you; and I can carry you to no place, where you will be leſs in danger of criticiſm on this account; for theſe perſons ridicule nothing but what is really ridiculous. So, my dear, don't be diffident, I am ſure you will not be diſagreeable to them.

WE then arrived at Mrs. Dorſin's; we went in and found three or four perſons with her. Ah! you have brought her at laſt, ſaid ſhe to Mrs. de Valville, on ſeeing me. Come, Miſs, come, let me embrace you; I am glad to ſee you; we will now ſit down to dinner; we only waited for you.

HOWEVER ignorant and unexperienced I was on theſe occaſions, as Mrs. de Valville had obſerved, I had ſomething of a natural taſte, and a kind of penetration, which made me diſcover and dive into the hearts of theſe gentlemen. It was not their wit that gave me this knowledge; though it is certain they had more of it than common, and

I heard them ſay many excellent things; but their addreſs and manner enabled me to form a right judgment of them. They delivered themſelves in a natural and familiar way without the leaſt mixture of art or ſtiffneſs; and their converſation was as free and eaſy, as if they had been diſcourſing on the moſt familiar ſubjects. They had a delicacy of ſentiment which appeared unacquired, and entirely natural to them. They did not ſeem to think they ſpoke better than others, they had only greater minds, and by that means they diſcourſed more elegantly and more to the purpoſe. Here was nothing like an ambition of ſhining: though they ſhone in all they ſaid. Such a converſation ſo excellent, ſo delicate, though ſo ſimple and natural, could not fail of charming me and ſtriking me with admiration. All was juſt and ſuitable; all ſweet, facetious, gay, and ſprightly. I had formed a very different idea of the polite world. I had repreſented it to myſelf as full of little frivolous rules, numberleſs inſignificant punctilios, and of grave and important trifles difficult to learn, and which, however ridiculous in themſelves, we muſt be acquainted with, upon pain of being a ſubject of public cenſure. But far from this; here was nothing that correſponded with theſe ideas; nothing that could embarraſs me; nothing that could make me afraid to ſpeak; nothing, on the contrary, that did not encourage me to bear a part in the converſation with freedom. Their wit ſupplied me with words, and helped me to expreſs myſelf when I ſpoke obſcurely; they then purſued the thought, expreſſed it for me, and gave me all the honour of it. In ſhort, they made me perfectly eaſy: and I, who had imagined that there was ſo much myſtery in being polite, was ſurpriſed to ſee that there was nothing very particular

lar in it; nothing that appeared ſtrange; nothing but what was engaging, amiable, and extremely obliging. And methought this politeneſs is what every great mind finds in itſelf as ſoon as it ſees it in others.

But we are at Mrs. Dorſin's as well as at the laſt pages of this part of my life. 'Twas here I promiſed to introduce the portraiture of this lady. I have ſaid it will be long too; but I can't tell whether it will or no. Perhaps it will be ſhort, for I am very weary. Theſe deſcriptions coſt me a good deal of pains. But however here it is.

This accompliſhed lady was much younger than my benefactreſs: ſhe had a mixture of majeſty and ſweetneſs, joined with an open and moſt expreſſive countenance, in which all her thoughts were painted in the ſtrongeſt colours. A countenance, full of unnumbered charms, and a thouſand beauties which want a name.

This, Madam, is part of her picture, but the deſcription is not minute enough to be worth your notice: For to ſay ſhe was an admirable beauty, is ſaying very little to the purpoſe; ſince this was not the firſt idea that occurred on ſeeing her: I was ſtruck with ſomething more, which I muſt endeavour to deſcribe. Let us perſonate beauty then, and ſuppoſe, that weary of being for ever charming, ſhe endeavours to conceal the little graces that ſport about her, and reſolves to taſte the calm ſatisfaction of barely pleaſing; ſhe tempers her beauty without loſing it; and captivates ſtill, though without deſign: ſuch a one would exactly reſemble Mrs. Dorſin, and this is the idea I would convey of this amiable lady. But this is not all: I have here only mentioned her perſon; add to it a ſoul which ſparkles in the countenance, and renders viſible all its ſenſations; that ſpreads and diffuſes

fuſes over it the ſame ſpirit, delicacy, life, ſeriouſneſs, gaity, and mirth, which it by turns enjoys itſelf: and from hence judge of all the various accidents of force, of gracefulneſs, of delicacy, and all the rapid expreſſions that were viſible in her countenance.

It is commonly thought, that our ſouls are more capacious or narrow, more penetrating or confuſed and clouded, according to the configuration of the organs to which it is united: and if this be true, nature muſt ſurely have given Mrs. Dorſin a moſt favourable organization; for never was mind more active and ſprightly, or more ſolid and judicious than hers.

Most women of wit have an unnatural and affected way of expreſſing it, which renders it diſtaſteful. One ſpeaks in a careleſs indifferent manner, in order to make us think that her fine genius does not need the aid of reflection, and that all ſhe ſays eſcapes her without thought. Another ſpeaks with a cold, grave, and deciſive tone, to give herſelf an air of importance. Another ſays only fine things, which ſhe delivers in a manner finer ſtill than all ſhe ſays; and another will fall into a ridiculous gaity, and act the flirt. But Mrs. Dorſin had none of theſe little female arts: the ſubject of her diſcourſe regulated the tone of her voice: ſhe did not ſeem to think that ſhe had wit; but ſhe had that ſource from whence it neceſſarily proceeds, a pleaſing vivacity mixed with ſolidity and good ſenſe, which were agreeably expreſſed according to the various exigences that required it: for her underſtanding was of no ſex: it comprehended the ſtrength, the ſolidity, the delicacy, the gaity of both.

Every one has a deſire of pleaſing; which, when kept within due bounds, is both juſt and natural:

tural: the fair are apt to indulge it too much, and to place great part of their happineſs upon it: they too commonly make uſe of every trifling artifice to engage the attention, and every action ſays, *Pray look at me.* But the amiable Mrs. Dorſin was a ſtranger to all theſe grimaces: ſhe had a natural pride and ſelf-complacence, which would not permit her to ſtoop to them, nor reap any advantage that might be drawn from them; but if ever ſhe forgot herſelf in this point, none knew it but herſelf. In general ſhe had rather be thought ſenſible than charming: ſhe did not confound her ideas of the perfections of her mind with the graces of her perſon; for if her fine ſenſe was admired, ſhe always thought it was herſelf that you honoured; but you only complimented her form, when you ſaid ſhe was amiable. Such were her ſentiments. But tho' ſhe always experienced the higheſt ſatisfaction when her company ſeemed delighted with her converſation; yet ſhe would have bluſhed, had ſhe given you room to think ſhe had uſed any arts to render her perſon admired: for ſhe left to you the care of finding out her charms, without ſtooping to diſcover them herſelf.

But, I am too much fatigued to proceed; beſides I grow ſleepy: I am now to paint one of the beſt hearts in the world, though a very ſingular one; but I am not in a condition to undertake it at preſent: I ſhall therefore refer it to the fifth part, where I ſhall continue my life in the convent.

The End of the Fourth Part.

THE VIRTUOUS ORPHAN.

PART V.

HERE, Madam, is the fifth part of my life; I have been ſo expeditious ſince you received the fourth, that I begin to think I may boaſt with a good grace of my diligence: but as this would be giving myſelf airs, which perhaps I ſhould very ill ſupport; I think it becomes me more modeſtly to decline the merit of it. You have thought me very lazy, and not without reaſon; continue to think ſo ſtill; and then if I ſhould happen to be expeditious, (if you don't flatter me) you will be agreeably ſurprized.

You remember that my benefactreſs, Valville, and I dined at Mrs. Dorſin's, and that I was attempting to draw her picture, but left it unfiniſhed.——— I ſhall now go on with it.

I HAVE already given you a deſcription of her perſon and wit, I now come to the diſpoſitions of her heart. Mrs. de Valville you thought extremely amiable; but Mrs. Dorſin's ſoul, as I have already informed you, was not at all inferior to her's, though in many reſpects widely different from it; but for fear you ſhould not readily underſtand wherein this difference conſiſts,

you

you will permit me to begin by a reflection. You may remember I painted Mrs. de Valville as a perſon of a great deal of natural ſweetneſs, united to a good ſhare of intelligence and plain ſenſe; but her wit, though far from being deſpicable, was not ſhining and remarkable enough to attract our admiration and applauſe: but I am now ſpeaking of a lady, who poſſeſſed the moſt ſparkling wit, and the moſt perfect delicacy of ſentiment. Let us ſuppoſe the moſt generous and beſt perſon in the world, with the moſt refined ſoul, and the moſt penetrating wit; I believe this perſon would not appear ſo charmingly beneficent as another of exactly the ſame diſpoſitions; but a more moderate ſhare of thoſe other accompliſhments. The reaſon is, we are apt to attribute to her good ſenſe thoſe actions which ſpring from the heart.

Most men, when they receive an obligation, would have the author of it inſenſible of the greatneſs of the favour conferred: ſuch a diſpoſition flatters their ingratitude, and ſooths that unnatural delicacy, which makes the ſenſe of being obliged painful to the mind. Perſons of this diſpoſition would have a benefactor good, without ſufficiently knowing the value and extent of that goodneſs. The more penetration he has, the more they are humbled: he ſees too clearly for them. The mind full of its ſelf-ſufficiency is elated, and would fain enjoy an independency unknown to nature and reaſon: and tho' every order of mankind from the higheſt to the loweſt, like the link of an uplifted chain, have a neceſſary dependence on each other; yet they bluſh at the thought of being obliged. Here they are afraid of appearing ungrateful, becauſe they are ſenſible that the leaſt degree of it will be taken notice of; but in the other caſe, having nothing to fear, the

pleaſure of receiving is doubled, and the delight of an acknowledgment is almoſt equal to that calm and ſweet ſatisfaction which accompanies generoſity. The one knows that ſhe has been of ſervice to you, but ſhe enters not minutely enough into her favours, and half of her goodneſs eſcapes her own notice; and as ſhe takes away from your acknowledgment, ſhe proportionably ſpares your confuſion: and this ſo charms the receiver, that he thinks her a thouſand times more obliging than the other; tho' ſhe has no other additional merit, than the having one qualification leſs.

Theſe were the characters of theſe engaging ladies. Here I hoped to end my reflection; but another thought occurs that I muſt add to render it compleat. I hope you will excuſe me, and think it needs no apology.

FROM whence comes it that almoſt all men are guilty of this prepoſterous kind of delicacy? muſt we derive its ſource from the real grandeur of our ſouls? is it an indignity to be obliged to ſtoop to any of our own ſpecies? or is the title of benefactor fit for the Deity alone? This is far from being the caſe. We have mutual wants, and a natural dependance on each other, that calls for reciprocal acts of kindneſs and compaſſion: we are formed with a tender ſenſe of the ſufferings of others, which ſo ſtrongly prompts us to acts of beneficence, that we can't refrain from relieving a worthy object without a conſiderable degree of pain and ſelf-denial. This is the ſecond conſtitution of nature, which we ſhall never be able to alter. Let us act then conformably to the ſituation in which we are placed; and if it is true that we have any real innate dignity of ſoul, let us draw from our preſent ſtation a rule of action worthy of ourſelves. You ſay, he that obliges you has an

advantage

advantage over you; would you preſerve this ſuperiority, be ungrateful, and you are only an atom in compariſon to him; but would you become his equal, you have nothing to do but to indulge a grateful ſenſe of the favours you receive: this is your beſt revenge. If he grows proud and aſſuming upon the favours he has conferred; humble him in your turn, and place yourſelf modeſtly above him by your acknowledgments. I ſay modeſtly; for if your gratitude has the leaſt tincture of vain-glory and oſtentation, the leaſt appearance of an uneaſy deſire of humbling him, you miſs your aim, and you only reſemble two pygmies, diſputing which is the leaſt.

I HAVE now done, Madam; I beg pardon for being ſo tedious, and return to Mrs. Dorſin. As you were ſo pleaſed with the picture which I have drawn of my benefactreſs, I thought my reflections here would not be miſplaced, to prevent your reading with prejudice a deſcription of another perſon, who poſſeſſed the ſame benevolence with a mind ſomething ſuperior; in order to ſhew in what manner her extraordinary wit and fine ſenſe will neceſſarily conſtitute a conſiderable difference in the apparent value of their good actions.

MANY, tho' of the moſt amiable diſpoſitions, will do no more for you than what you barely ſeek for; and render you preciſely the ſame favours you dared to aſk. I ſay *dared*, becauſe we have ſeldom the courage fully to expoſe our neceſſities; for we commonly act in theſe caſes with a reſerve, which prevents our ſetting them in a true light. Thus your timorouſneſs would be of diſſervice to you before theſe people, who would ſearch no farther into your circumſtances than you deſired to have them: their acts of beneficence are conducted according to their conception

tion of your wants, and the bounds of their understanding are the bounds of their goodneſs. But with Mrs. Dorſin it was quite the reverſe, ſhe penetrated into whatever you durſt not diſcover: this diſpoſition at once warmed and inſtructed her heart, and inſtantly inſpired her with that degree of goodneſs, which was ſuitable to your neceſſities. Nay, ſhe was apt to imagine your wants to be greater than you yourſelf thought them; and conſequently conferred more favours on you than you would ever have aſked; for her intention, wit, and penetration were all employed to ſerve you. She never appeared weary of this delightful employment; it was never her that was fatigued, but rather ſhe, out of an exceſs of concern for your happineſs, that teized you. She would preſs you to open your mind with the greateſt freedom; inform you of ſomething to your advantage, which perhaps never would have occurred to your thoughts; remind you of ſomething elſe, and with an air of ſweetneſs chide you for what you had forgot. In ſhort your buſineſs inſtantly became her's. And her tender concern ſo intereſted her in your affairs, that her generoſity ſeemed to ſubſide, as if her care had ſprung from ſomething ſelfiſh and mercenary; and you was almoſt in danger of thinking her zeal for your intereſt troubleſome. Inſtead of one piece of ſervice, which you would have thought this charming lady had conferred, you would oftentimes find yourſelf ſurrounded with obligations, and ſurprized to ſee yourſelf indebted to her for favours that you could not have foreſeen; and that in the ſame affair ſhe had provided for the future as well as for the preſent. She ſaw every thing, and made uſe of the minuteſt occaſion to aſſiſt you: ſhe became every day more ſerviceable, and thought herſelf under a neceſſity

of

of increaſing her kindneſs and condeſcenſion in proportion as ſhe obliged you.

MANY perſons, when they confer an act of beneficence, ſet an exceſſive value upon it, grow vain-glorious, and ſay to themſelves; Sure he muſt be extremely grateful, for I have been of particular ſervice to him. Mrs. Dorſin, on the contrary would ſay, I have ſerved him often, and have thereby accuſtomed him to believe, that I ſhall always be ready to do ſo; I muſt not therefore loſe this good opinion of me, but keep it alive by a continual endeavour to deſerve it.

THUS ſhe acted as if ſhe had been the obliged, and you had merited her acknowledgements: becauſe ſhe had ſerved you once, ſhe thought ſhe always ought to do it; and this concluſion was accompanied with ſuch an exquiſite pleaſure, as ſufficiently recompenſed all her favours. How amiable, how divinely charming do ſuch diſpoſitions render us! what an honour are they to human nature! and how nearly do they make us reſemble ſuperior intelligences, both in the rectitude of our natures, and the purity of our pleaſures!

A MIND, who deſires no greater reward for diſſipating anxiety and care, and diffuſing over the ſoul joy and tranquility, but the ſublime delight of preſerving this harmonious diſpoſition of the paſſions, and of ſympathizing in thoſe ſweet ſatisfactions which it has ſpread through the grateful heart: a mind, I ſay, of this noble diſpoſition, of this elevated dignity, taſtes the ſweeteſt and moſt refined delights that can ſwell the human breaſt.——But to proceed:

PERSONS of wit ſeldom know how to accommodate themſelves to thoſe who want it, or who have leſs than themſelves: they are at a loſs and

don't

don't know what to ſay in ſuch a converſation; but Mrs. Dorſin, who had much more than many who are allowed to have a great deal, did not even think of taking notice whether any in company had it or not: ſhe did not expect they ſhould have more than nature and improvement had given them; and ſhe herſelf then ſeemed to have no more than they. Mrs. Dorſin did not out of an affected complaiſance ſtoop to bring herſelf upon a level with others; and tho' ſhe condeſcended at all times and upon every occaſion, ſhe had no other merit in it, than in being born with a mind naturally of a ſenſible and philoſophic caſt, which would not permit her to reliſh the ridiculous pleaſure of deſpiſing another's wit; and which never made uſe of its own capacity in ſearching the extent of yours; but only in bringing itſelf down inſenſibly to it. She did not at all reflect that ſhe condeſcended to ſtoop to you, nor could you think that ſhe did: yet you would always find that ſhe gave life to the converſation, diffuſed chearfulneſs and good-humour around her, and inſpired with wit and vivacity thoſe perſons, who in other company ſeemed moſt to want theſe amiable qualifications.

On the other hand, perſons of the fineſt genius were ambitious of appearing in the moſt engaging light before her; not becauſe they thought it neceſſary to ſhine, in order to ſecure her eſteem; but charmed with her fine ſenſe and the delicacy of her ſentiments, they thought it an honour, which the world would take notice of, to be able to attract a peculiar regard from her, and to gain her approbation. The ladies exerted themſelves before her; not to try the extent of her wit, for that they were ſufficiently acquainted with; but to make her a witneſs of theirs: while ſhe gave them a full liberty of diſplaying their talents, and

ſeldom

ſeldom interrupted them, but to give that praiſe which ſhe ſo well knew how to beſtow. Her diſcourſe at once improved and delighted the mind, inſpired with confidence the diffident and timorous, and made all her company, how various ſoever their diſpoſitions, both eaſy to themſelves and agreeable to each other.

But how peculiar to great minds is this pleaſing affability! Go into what houſe you pleaſe, where there are perſons of various abilities and employments; ſuppoſe you at the ſame time find there a ſoldier, a courtier, a lawyer, an eccleſiaſtic, a profeſſor of the ſciences, and a man of letters; and while theſe are only maſters of their particular profeſſions, let them remain ever ſo long together, they maintain their characters diſtinctly, would never be united, and are as perfect ſtrangers to each other, as if they are all of a different nation, and ſeparately ſpoke a different language. And thus ill-placed, they are a kind of ſpectacle to each other. You find a troubleſome and ridiculous kind of ſubordination amongſt them, which the pride and arrogance of ſome, and the timidity of others, create and maintain. One bluntly interrogates the reſt; another aſſumes a pedantic and affected gravity; and a third modeſtly waits till he is ſpoke to. This perſon is for deciding every thing, though he knows not what he ſays; and that, though he is in the right, dares not ſpeak his ſentiments: they none of them loſe ſight of what they are, but all adjuſt their diſcourſe and countenances to their reſpective circumſtances: What a miſerable and painful diſcord!

At Mrs. Dorſin's there was nothing like this to be ſeen, for ſhe had the ſecret of curing perſons of this unſociable diſpoſition. Rank and circumſtances were there inſtantly forgot; nor was it remembered whether

whether they were perſons of great or ſmall importance. It was men converſing with men, amongſt whom the beſt arguments only could prevail. Like ſuperior ſpirits of equal dignity, though of different capacities, all united in a free converſation; they are regardleſs of the titles chance had formerly given them here below; and are ſenſible that thoſe fortituous events which here diſtinguiſhed them, ought not to puff up the one or humble the other. Thus it was at Mrs. Dorſin's, where all were inſpired with a reaſonable and philoſophic way of thinking. But yet on the other hand, ſhe did not refuſe to conform to popular prejudices; and voluntarily complied with ſome things, which the vanity of mankind had introduced: for ſhe took care to cultivate an acquaintance and friendſhip with the great and powerful. This ſhe thought policy demanded, and it would be therefore imprudent to neglect it: ſince their friendſhip contributed to ſupport her in the high opinion of others.

I TOLD you that perhaps I ſhould be very long in this character, and you ſee, Madam, I have kept my word. I will mention only one or two articles more before I have done with it: and muſt omit a great many particulars, leſt you ſhould think me tedious. A general character may be drawn in a few words; but an exact enumeration of particulars has no end. To proceed then to the laſt article:

THIS moſt amiable lady, to this excellent heart and diſtinguiſhed ſenſe, had further a great, courageous, and reſolute mind; a ſoul ſuperior to all events, and whoſe dignity would not ſuffer it to bend or be depreſſed under any human accident; that found its reſources where others would have been moſt at loſs; that might be afflicted but never

caſt down, never involved in inextricable perplexities: We admired her behaviour more in afflictions, than we thought of lamenting her: ſhe always preſerved, in the midſt of the greateſt troubles, a countenance grave and ſerene; and a decent gaity amidſt the greateſt ſubjects of joy. I have ſeen her in both theſe circumſtances, and never could find that they deprived her of her preſence of mind, the ſweetneſs of her manners, or the tranquility of her converſation with her friends; for ſhe was entirely yours, though ſhe had reaſon to have all her thoughts wholly employed about herſelf. And I have ſometimes been ſo ſurprized at this, that notwithſtanding my tenderneſs for her, I could not help letting my affection give way to my admiration. I have ſeen her in a long and dangerous illneſs, in which ſhe ſeemed to languiſh under the remedies applied for her relief: when, though her paleneſs ſufficiently told her diſorder, her countenance was ſo compoſed and ſerene, that you would not have diſcovered it by her looks or behaviour. If you enquired how ſhe did, ſhe would only ſay that ſhe was ill: If you did not aſk her, ſhe would talk to you about your own affairs; or calmly bear a part in the converſation. Her ſervants adored her: they thought their intereſt inſeparable from hers: whatever ſhe loſt, the loſs was equally theirs; and for the ſame reaſon, their attachment to her made them regard her riches as their own: when ſhe was afflicted, they were ſo too; and when ſhe rejoiced, they ſympathized alſo in her ſatisfaction. By this you may judge how dear ſhe was to them, and how engaging muſt be her behaviour, thus to enchant and tame perſons, whom a groveling education too commonly renders ſelfiſh and mercenary; and to inſpire with friendſhip a ſet of people, the beſt of whom

whom can hardly prevail upon themſelves to pardon the ſervitude we require, the eaſe and indolence we enjoy, and the faults they don't fail to obſerve in our conduct.

Mrs. Dorſin was extremely generous; but the œconomy of her ſervants repaired the effects of that goodneſs, which ſhe often exerted without bounds. But where will this ſubject carry me? I fear you are diſpleaſed with my prolixity: Remember, Madam, it is a delightful employment to do juſtice to thoſe we love: but I ſincerely beg pardon for indulging this pleaſure at the expence of your patience.

Where did I break off? I remember I was at Mrs. Dorſin's. I ſuppreſs her careſſes and the obliging manner in which ſhe entertained me; as well as all thoſe gallant and agreeable things the gentlemen expreſſed, who dined with us. At laſt ſome new company coming in, my benefactreſs took that opportunity to retire: Valville and I followed her, and her friend waited upon us to embrace me; when after compliments on both ſides we departed for the convent, whither Mrs. de Valville waited upon me.

All this while I have made no mention of Valville. He continually fixed his eyes upon me, which I ſometimes returned with a tender look, as by ſtealth. Whilſt the diſcourſe was directed to me, he ſeemed thoughtful, as if in pain for my anſwer, and then looked on the reſt to ſee if they were pleaſed with my ſentiments; which happened pretty often. And though their compliments proceeded from their goodneſs, I could not help flattering myſelf that there was ſome juſtice in them. I confeſs, that at firſt I was out of countenance, and my diſcourſe ſufficiently proved it; but this preſently wore off, and I acted my part very

very well afterwards, even in the opinion of Mrs. de Valville; who, as we were in the coach, ſaid merrily; Well, child, does the company we have been in pleaſe you? It appears to me that you were very agreeable to them; we ſhall make ſomething of you in time: Ay, ay, ſaid Valville in the ſame tone, there is room to hope that Miſs Marianne will render herſelf agreeable to them one time or other. I don't know what may happen, anſwered I laughing; but if I don't, it ſhall never be for want of endeavours on my ſide; it is you, Madam, muſt take care you don't repent chuſing me for a daughter. We entertained each other with this kind of raillery till we came to the convent, when my benefactreſs deſired Valville to conduct me in. On this he rung the bell, the door opened, and he had only time to ſay with a ſigh, You are now, my charmer, going to ſhut yourſelf up, and in a moment I ſhall be a recluſe too; for though in the midſt of the buſy world, 'tis you alone will employ my thoughts. What is the world to me, returned I? I know none but you and my dear mamma; nor do I deſire to know any other. He appeared moved at this diſcourſe; and whilſt they were opening the door, had the dexterity to preſs my hand to his lips without being diſcovered by Mrs. de Valville, who waited for him in her coach: at leaſt he believed ſhe did not ſee him, becauſe he was not willing ſhe ſhould do ſo, and I reaſoned much after the ſame manner. Mean time I drew back my hand, but not till he had done with it; for we are always too late in ſuch caſes.

I WENT in with a mind gay yet thoughtful, and he retired. I fancied that thoſe who are left behind on theſe occaſions are more uneaſy than they who leave them. His going I thought would

divert

divert and diſſipate the pain of parting; and even the motion of his body, as well as the objects around, would help to recreate him; whilſt I, on the contrary, had every thing around me that would indulge a gloomy penſive diſpoſition, eſpecially as this retreat was a convent, a place from whence love is baniſhed, and where every thing that paſſes is ſo foreign to the tender diſpoſitions of the heart; for a cloiſter renders ſuch ſeparations more ſerious and affecting than any other place.

On the other hand, I had great reaſon for gaity and conſolation; ſince Valville loved me, and was permitted to do it, and I riſqued nothing by returning his paſſion; what an agreeable ſubject of contemplation! beſides Mrs. de Valville's behaviour to me, as well as the reſt of her conduct, had informed me that I had nothing to do but to preſerve my patience, and take courage.

Valville was no ſooner gone, than I went up into my chamber; where I began to undreſs me, and put on my diſhabille, againſt ſupper-time; but on ſecond thoughts I deferred it till I had been at the refectory. Amongſt the boarders, there was one pretty near my own age, who was agreeable enough to make her think herſelf a great beauty; but her high value for her dear perſon rendered her whole conduct ridiculous: nothing was the object of her contemplation but her own face, the charms of which were the ſubject of every reflection: ſhe was never weary of this idea, and all her actions diſcovered a mind extremely vain and full of the moſt conſummate affectation. Whenever ſhe looked at any one, ſhe did it only to ſhew her large eyes; which ſhe rendered fierce or ſoft according to her deſire either to command reſpect or to pleaſe. But ſhe ſeldom put on theſe looks of mildneſs; for ſhe was more fond of commanding,

than

than appearing with a graceful tenderneſs; becauſe as ſhe was a lady of quality, ſhe expected great deference ſhould be paid her.

You remember, Madam, the diſcourſe I had with the abbeſs, when I preſented myſelf to her before Mrs. de Valville; I then mentioned the misfortunes of my life, which my benefactreſs was ſo touched with, that ſhe neglected to injoin the abbeſs to keep them ſecret, when ſhe took me under her care, and placed me with her; for few people attend to every thing at once. I however had thought of it within two hours after I had entered her houſe, and moſt humbly entreated her not to divulge what I had told her. Alas! my dear child, cried ſhe, I ſhall be far very from it: fear nothing: do you think I don't know the conſequence of ſuch things?——But whether I was then too late with my requeſt, or that deſiring her to ſay nothing had rendered my ſecret burthenſome to her, and had only ſerved to heighten the temptation to diſcover it, it was ſcarcely nine o'clock the next day, before I was the common talk, and my hiſtory had run through the whole convent: I obſerved every where the nuns whiſpering to each other, and rudely ſtaring at me wherever I went: I ſoon knew the cauſe, but unable to help myſelf, I caſt down my eyes, and ſeemed to take no notice of it. However there was hardly one amongſt them that did not expreſs a great deal of friendſhip for me by their careſſes, which I think at firſt they did out of a curioſity of hearing me ſpeak. A girl like me, when ſhe enters a convent, is at firſt a kind of ſpectacle, and the whole diſcourſe for ſome time conſiſts of ſuch impertinent queſtions as theſe, Is ſhe tall?——is ſhe little?——what ſort of an air has ſhe?——what does ſhe ſay?——how is ſhe dreſs'd?——is ſhe handſome? in ſhort to this inquiſitive

quiſitive diſpoſition, nothing that ſhe has appears inſignificant, nor any action too trifling not to engage their attention. This extravagant curioſity commonly terminates, in their conceiving a higher opinion of her if ſhe is amiable, or a much worſe if ſhe is not ſo, than ſhe really deſerves; and this is the common effect of thoſe diſpoſitions which prompt us to look upon perſons of whom we are told extraordinary things. However I ſoon found their curioſity was of the greateſt ſervice to me; all the nuns loved me, but never told me what they had learned of my miſfortunes, but their commendations of my perſon, and that air of ſweetneſs and modeſty they complimented me with, were uttered with ſuch a lamentable tone, that you would have thought they were weeping over me. This was the effect of that knowledge, which they out of tenderneſs to me, were not willing to diſcover any other way; but which was as intelligible as if they had ſaid, *poor little orphan how deplorable is your ſituation, thus to be reduced to live on the charity of others.*

But let me proceed to what makes me here mention theſe particulars. This young boarder, ſo puffed up with her own charms, was the only perſon who treated me with contempt, and who had not indeed condeſcended to ſpeak to me. Scarce could ſhe reſolve to return with a ſlight inclination of her head, the low courteſies which I conſtantly made her whenever we met; and it was eaſily ſeen, that even this was attended with reluctance. One day as ſhe was taking a turn in the garden, with ſome of our companions, I happen'd to paſs by her, when caſting a negligent look at me, I heard her ſay, with the tone and air of a princeſs, Yes, the thing is genteel enough, it is a lady I think that has the charity to pay her board: don't

don't you think ſhe reſembles my Jenny? (this was a ſervant ſhe had to wait upon her, and who indeed favoured me a little, but in a bad likeneſs) I obſerved that thoſe that were with her made her no anſwer, whilſt I bluſh'd very much, and the tears came into my eyes: the nun with whom I was walking, was a lady of admirable good ſenſe, and had conceived a particular regard for me, which I returned with an undiſſembled friendſhip; ſhe ſhook her head at this ſpeech, and ſaid nothing. I could not forbear ſaying with a ſigh, Oh how cruel, how barbarouſly cruel are ſome perſons! for it would have been to no purpoſe to conceal my uneaſineſs, ſince I found every one in the houſe was acquainted with my circumſtances. Don't mind her Miſs, ſaid the nun, taking hold of my hand with a look of friendſhip, you have advantages which greatly revenge you of this haughty impertinent creature; you would have greater reaſon to be vain than ſhe, tho' you had not had more ſenſe, and a better underſtanding to ſet you you above her. Don't envy her any of the advantages ſhe enjoys, for indeed it is ſhe only that has reaſon to be jealous. You are very obliging, Madam, returned I, with a look of acknowledgment. Alas! you ſpeak of my having ſenſe and underſtanding, I ſhould be far from bluſhing at my misfortunes, if every body had as much ſenſe and underſtanding as you.

THIS treatment I was expoſed to from this haughty lady, who could not perhaps forgive my being as handſome as herſelf. However, I went into the refectory, dreſſed as I was, and even glad that I was ſo, that I might have an opportunity of diſconcerting my jealous rival, of whom I chanced to think as I was going thither; and who would, I thought, make a compariſon between

her

her form and mine, that would contribute more than a little to her mortification; for there were but two or three in the houſe that had ever ſeen me compleatly dreſſed before, and they but once. I have already told you that I was not hated in the convent; my friendly and engaging behaviour had procur'd me the good will of every body, except the lady juſt mentioned, and made them love to praiſe and do me juſtice. I had no ſooner entered, than the eyes of every one were fixed upon me; they expreſſed a general ſurprize, which was very agreeable, as it ſeemed attended with an air of pleaſure and friendſhip. They from time to time regarded my rival, to examine the mien ſhe aſſumed on this occaſion, and to ſee if her looks did not confeſs that ſhe thought herſelf out-done; for they had taken notice of her jealouſy. She no ſooner ſaw me, than I obſerved her ſmile with an air of contempt, and hold down her head. A behaviour ſhe probably thought moſt proper, to ſupport her cauſe, and maintain her vanity. When ſupper was over, all the boarders went into the garden, and I amongſt the reſt; we were followed by ſome of the nuns, amongſt whom was one I have already mentioned under the character of my friend. We were no ſooner there, but my companions came up to me. One aſked where I had been, that ſhe had not ſeen me to-day; another took notice of my gown, and admired its beauty; while another ſeemed delighted with the fineneſs of my head-dreſs, and obſerved that it became me extremely. I had many remarks made upon theſe trifles, which were expreſſed with a great deal of good-nature. Mean while, my friend the nun came up to us, and maliciouſly addreſſing herſelf to the lady that looked upon me with ſuch contempt, Is it not true, Miſs, ſaid ſhe, that this would be

a lovely victim to offer up to heaven? What a fine ſacrifice would it be if this charming young lady ſhould renounce the world, and become a nun! Lard! mother, the creature is well enough, returned ſhe, I think it is the beſt ſtep ſuch as ſhe can take. — Then turning to me, Marianne, continued ſhe, your gown is mighty fine, and every thing I think is anſwerable to it.———Was you ever ſo fine before?——Why it muſt coſt a good deal of money——The lady that takes care of you is mighty generous——What age is ſhe of? is ſhe old; Does ſhe think of ſecuring to you ſomething to live on; for ſhe can't live for ever; and it would be a pity, ſhould ſhe not put you in a condition to be always as well dreſſed ——one is ſoon uſed to it; and I adviſe you to tell her ſo.

THE general ſilence which this diſcourſe occaſioned, and which in part proceeded from the aſtoniſhment it had caſt the young ladies into, diſconcerted me extremely. I remained ſpeechleſs and confuſed at ſeeing the amazement the others were in, and could not help ſhedding ſome tears, before I was able to anſwer her. During my ſilence, the nun replied to her ſharply, What do you mean, Madam, by this fine diſcourſe? What buſineſs have you to interfere in this lady's concerns? I find I muſt inform you, that your aſſuming behaviour humbles no body here but yourſelf. We are not ignorant, Miſs, of the baſe motive of thoſe haughty airs you give yourſelf. My lady, your mother, when ſhe placed you here, informed us that an unſufferable pride was your favourite vice, warned us of the effects of it, and intreated us if poſſible to cure you of it: and I will aſſure you my endeavours ſhall not be wanting for that purpoſe; and I deſire when you ſpeak to Miſs, that

for the future you call her no more Marianne, as you have juſt done, ſince ſhe always uſes you with reſpect, and there is none but you amongſt us who take the liberty to uſe her otherwiſe. You have no right to diſpenſe with the obligations of that decency and politeneſs, which ought always to be obſerved amongſt us.———But what reaſon have you, Miſs, to be afflicted, continued ſhe, looking at me with compaſſion and friendſhip in her eyes? why do you weep? is there any thing to be aſhamed of in the misfortunes that have ſtripped you of your parents? It muſt be a very baſe and wicked mind that could take occaſion from the calamities of others (to which we are all liable) to uſe us ill; eſpecially one like you, ſo well born and ſo genteely educated; for if we may judge of the condition of people from the opinion their behaviour inſpires, this lady here, who thinks herſelf ſo much your ſuperior, would not degrade herſelf at all by looking upon you at leaſt as her equal as to birth, and would be extremely happy if ſhe was ſo with regard to your amiable character. No, Madam, returned I, with a mixture of kindneſs and trouble in my looks; I have nothing; God has taken every thing from me; and I ought to believe myſelf the loweſt of mankind; but I had much rather be as I am, than to have all thoſe advantages Miſs has above me, and be capable of inſulting the afflicted. This diſcourſe, and the tears that were mingled with it, touched the hearts of all my companions, and made them intereſt themſelves in my uneaſineſs. Lard! who thought of inſulting her, cried the jealous young lady, bluſhing with ſhame and ſpight. What hurt is there, pray, in adviſing her to take care of herſelf? There needs a mighty deal of ceremony to be uſed with ſuch as ſhe. No body made any anſwer to this;

my

my friend the nun had already turned her back, and drew to our ſide the greateſt number of the boarders, who followed us, while only two or three ſtayed with my enemy, amongſt whom one was her relation, and another her friend.

THIS little adventure, which I thought might be inſtructive to thoſe young ladies to whom you may give this to read, cauſed me to redouble my modeſty and politeneſs to my companions, who in their turn increaſed their friendſhip for me.—— But let me proceed with my hiſtory.

MRS. de Valville came to ſee me the third day after our dining with Mrs. Dorſin; and ſome days after this I received at nine in the morning a ſecond note, which deſired me to get ready by one o'clock to pay a ſecond viſit at Mrs. Dorſin's, with a new order to dreſs myſelf; which was followed with a perfect obedience. At the time appointed I was told ſhe waited for me; it was eight days ſince I had ſeen Valville, and I confeſs that I thought it very long. I hoped to find him at the gate of the convent as I had done the firſt time; but I was miſtaken. Mrs. de Valville thought proper to leave him behind, and I was only received by a footman, who conducted me to her coach. I was immediately ſtunned; my gaity left me in a moment. I diſſembled however, and advanced ſecretly diſcouraged, though I would willingly have concealed it from my benefactreſs; but my face was not made to diſſemble, my mien betrayed me, ſhe perceived my trouble in my countenance; for in ſpight of my endeavours to hide it, I approached her with ſuch a diſordered air, that ſhe could not help ſmiling as ſoon as ſhe ſaw me. This ſmile a little revived my courage, for I thought it a good ſign. Come in, child, ſaid ſhe; I placed myſelf, and we drove away. There wants ſomebody here, cried ſhe laughing, does not there? Who is that

dam? ſaid I, ſeeming to know nothing of the matter; who, child! replied ſhe, ſure you know better than I, tho' I am his mother; O it is Mr. de Valville, returned I, but I thought we ſhould find him at Mrs. Dorſin's: No, no, ſaid ſhe, it is better than that, he waits for us at one of his friends, from whence we ſhall take him in our way, I was not willing to bring him here, but you ſhall ſee him by and by.

In ſhort we ſoon ſtopped, I had perceived a lacquey at a diſtance, ſtanding at a gentleman's door, and had obſerved that he diſappeared in an inſtant, and was run without doubt to inform his maſter, who had probably ordered him to wait for us, and who indeed was coming to us, as ſoon as we arrived. How ſweet is the pleaſure, when after a painful abſence, we ſee one we love! how delightful is it to find the dear agreeable object again! I at once thought, at ſeeing him at the door, that he had taken ſome meaſures to haſten his meeting me a minute or two! and how valuable is a minute, how vaſtly precious to thoſe that love! and how pleaſed was my heart to think, he had taken care to forward our mutual joy, by that ſingle minute.

What, my ſon here already, cried Mrs. de Valville, you are willing to improve every moment. See what it is to have a mother returned he in the ſame tone, whoſe tenderneſs makes her divine all that paſſes in our hearts. Hold your tongue, ſaid ſhe, ſmiling, ſuppreſs this ſort of language; let your tender diſcourſes alone, if you pleaſe, till I am gone. You caſt down your eyes, added ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to me; I ſhall teach you better manners; I ſaw you turn pale, Miſs, becauſe he was not with me; my company was not enough for you. O Madam, don't be diſ-

pleaſed

pleaſed with her returned Valville, caſting a glance at me full of tenderneſs; would it be agreeable to you, that ſhe ſhould be inſenſible of the abſence of a man to whom you intend to marry her? if you will turn away your head, Madam, I have a great deſire to kiſs her hand to thank her for it; here he ſeized my hand, but I ſnatch'd it from him haſtily, at the ſame time hitting him a tap over the fingers, and immediately taking hold of my benefactreſs's hand, I kiſs'd it, with an emotion expreſſive of the greateſt delight and affection. O ye little hypocrite return'd ſhe, ſqueezing mine, you both abuſe the reſpect you owe me; come, be quiet, let us talk of other things. Have you ſeen my brother, ſon? how did he do this morning? A little better, Madam, returned he, but continues ſleepy, as he was yeſterday; this drowſineſs diſturbs me, ſaid Mrs. de Valville, we muſt not ſtay ſo long as we did the other day. I muſt go betimes to ſee my brother.

We were at this part of our diſcourſe, when the coach ſtopt at Mrs. Dorſin's; we found very good company there, for it was the ſame I had ſeen before, with the addition of two others, who did not appear ſuperfluous, and whoſe obliging behaviour, and curious way of looking at me, ſeem'd to ſay that they waited to ſee me, and had been entertained with ſome diſcourſe to my advantage. We dined, and they made me talk more than I had done the time before; Mrs. Dorſin according to cuſtom loaded me with careſſes. But you will diſpenſe with a detail of what paſs'd, and let me proceed.

About an hour after we were riſen from table, Mrs. de Valville was told that one of her ſervants wanted to ſpeak to her. It was to tell her, that Mr. de Climal was in danger, and that they were endeavouring to bring him out of an

apoplectic fit, into which he had fallen two hours before. She entered the room with tears in her eyes, told us this melancholy news, took leave off the company, left me at the convent, and haſted to viſit the ſick gentleman with Valville, who appear'd touched with the condition of his uncle, as well as uneaſy at the haſty and abrupt manner, in which he was ſnatched from the pleaſure he ſeemed to enjoy in my company. I was even more diſturbed than he, which I let him ſee by my looks, and I went quite melancholy to ſhut myſelf up in my chamber, where I indulged and gave myſelf up to the moſt gloomy reflections.

If Mr. de Climal dies now, ſaid I to myſelf, Valville who is already rich, will be ſtill much more ſo; and, Oh! how do I know but this acquiſition of wealth, may be of prejudice to me? is it poſſible that the heir to ſuch an immenſe fortune ſhould marry me? will it not make Mrs. de Valville, herſelf diſown that ſurpriſing and almoſt incredible goodneſs ſhe has ſhewn in approving our love? will ſhe reſign her ſon, that may now make the greateſt alliances, and dignify his family with honours and titles? will not this be a temptation to her? Sure here was ſufficient room to be alarm'd. A moment after, I reaſon'd thus; Valville, I am ſure, has a great deal of tenderneſs for me, his affection has made him refuſe all the advantages that might reſult from his marrying one of his equals: but will it fortify him againſt the ambition of making an alliance with a family much greater and more powerful than his own? will he reſiſt the allurements of honour, and the noble employments that they may procure him? will his love be proof againſt all this? there are degrees of generoſity, ſuperior to the reach of the moſt generous minds; hearts capable of ſuſtaining themſelves

ſelves under ſuch trying proofs are ſo very rare, that it is almoſt too much to hope to meet with one poſſeſs'd with a ſufficient fortitude to bear it: and that mind muſt be look'd upon as deſerving the epithet of great, that cannot be overcome by any temptation beneath the greateſt. I had, however, no reaſon to fear on this account, for it was not ambition that could rob me of the heart of my dear Valville; yet nevertheleſs I was extremely diſturb'd, and my inquietude deprived me of all repoſe.

I WAS going to ariſe the next day, when I ſaw a nun enter my chamber, who told me that the abbeſs deſired me to dreſs as quick as poſſible; and that this was the reſult of a letter ſhe had juſt received from Mrs. de Valville, in which ſhe deſired her to permit me to go immediately, and there is even, added ſhe, a coach waiting for you in the court.

THIS was another ſubject of perplexity, my heart beat, and my mind was fill'd with the moſt uneaſy perturbations: Send for me ſo early! ſaid I to myſelf; Oh what has happened? what does ſhe threaten me with? I have no other reſource here than the protection of Mrs. de Valville, (for I durſt not then call her mamma,) and will ſhe take that away? am I going to loſe her? one can be ſure of nothing in ſuch circumſtances as mine; no body is obliged to ſupport me; my whole reliance is upon a generous mind, who may when ſhe pleaſes withhold her favours and abandon me to miſery, without giving me cauſe to complain of her; and to effect this ſhe need only liſten to the ill report of a hypocrite; this alone might ſufficiently diſguſt and enrage her againſt me. Theſe thoughts I revolved in my mind whilſt I was dreſſing myſelf. The unhappy eaſily conceive an ill

opinion of their condition, becauſe they put little truſt in the bleſſings they poſſeſs.

In fine, I was ſoon ready; I went out dreſs'd very negligently, and ſtept into the coach. I imagined they were carrying me to Mrs. de Valville's, but I was quite miſtaken, the coach ſtopp'd at Mr. de Climal's, I at firſt knew the houſe again, for you know it was not very long ſince I was there; but judge what was my ſurprize! I at once thought all was loſt. Now I ſee what is done, ſaid I to myſelf, I ſee that I am ruined; this wicked man has recovered, and will revenge himſelf; I muſt expect to be loaded with a thouſand calumnies; he will give every thing what turn he pleaſes; he paſſes for a good man, and in ſpite of all my efforts to vindicate myſelf, and make my innocence appear, he will impoſe upon my benefactreſs, and make her believe all his horrid falſhoods. Oh my God! how wicked is this abandoned wretch! And indeed, there was reaſon to fear what I apprehended; the menaces he gave me, when I left Mrs. du Tour; the ſcene that paſt between us and the monk, to whom I had been to make my complaints, and before whom I had been obliged to vindicate myſelf; the marks of friendſhip Mrs. de Valville had expreſs'd when he ſaw her ſalute me at a diſtance; the fear that I ſhould reveal, or had already revealed his baſeneſs to that lady, to whom he was ſenſible I was known; all this added to my being obliged to go to him, without being previouſly acquainted with the viſit I was to make, was enough to make me imagine, that I was going to ſuffer ſome new affronts, and receive freſh cauſe of inquietude from him. Who knows but he may ſay that it was I who tempted him, in order to engage him to ſerve me, ſaid I, but this account would be very different from that he told

told father St. Vincent; he there only accuſed me of being willing to believe that he loved me, and this good monk who heard us both, will not ſure refuſe his teſtimony to a poor creature unjuſtly loaded with ſuch black calumnies. Thus I reaſoned, when I ſaw myſelf in the court of Mr. de Climal's houſe, and ſtept out of the coach in a fit of trembling, ſuited to the dreadful ſcene for which I was preparing myſelf.

As I entered the hall I obſerved two ſtaircaſes, and ask'd a footman, which I was to aſcend, he told me that on the right-hand, down which I inſtantly ſaw Valville coming to meet me with precipitation. Aſtoniſhed to ſee him there, I ſtopt without knowing what I did; and endeavoured to examine his mien, and with what air he regarded me: he appeared ſad and dejected, but in a manner that intimated nothing againſt me; on the contrary, he addreſs'd me with the moſt tender air: Come, Miſs, ſaid he with a look of love and ſoftneſs, and taking me by the hand, come, my dear, no time is to be loſt; my uncle is dying, and deſires firſt to ſpeak to you. Me! Sir, returned I, breathing more freely, for the manner of his ſpeaking to me had revived and given me courage, and made his dying uncle appear leſs dangerous. I could not think it probable that a man would fill up his laſt moments with guilt. Me! Sir, cried I again, what does he wait for me for? what would he have with me?——We don't know that, returned he, but this morning he ask'd my mother, if ſhe was particularly acquainted with the young woman, that ſhe ſaluted in the convent ſome days ago: my mother replied that ſhe was, and even told him in few words, in what manner you became a boarder in the convent, without concealing that it was ſhe

who plac'd you there. Upon this, You can prevail with her then to come here, anſwered he, and I deſire ſhe may be ſent for, I muſt ſee her, for I have ſomething to ſay to her before I die; and my mother in anſwer to his requeſt wrote to the abbeſs to permit you to come. This, Miſs, is all I am able to tell you. Alas! return'd I, his deſire of ſeeing me has very much diſturb'd me; I imagined that he had ſome ill intention againſt me. You were miſtaken, replied he, he appears at leaſt to have diſpoſitions very far from it. This paſſed as we were going up ſtairs. My mother, added he, deſired me to inform you of this before you ſaw Mr. de Climal.

HERE we were at the chamber-door: I have already told you that I began to take courage; but the ſight of his chamber, into which I was going to enter, made me relapſe into my former uneaſineſs. It was a ſtrange viſit I was going to pay, and there were a variety of little reaſons that contributed to render it painful. How very diſagreeable was it to me to appear before a man, who, in my opinion, could not help being humbled at ſeeing me. His age, his hypocriſy, and the baſe means he made uſe of to delude my youth and innocent ſimplicity, would contribute to confound and abaſh him in the agonies of death. And tho' expiring, he muſt be confuſed at the thought of ſeeing me, whom he is going to leave a living witneſs of his infamy.

THE firſt perſon I ſaw was father St. Vincent, ſitting at his pillow; and next him ſat Mrs. de Valville, with her back towards me. At the ſight of this monk, whom I ſurprized at leaſt as much as he did me, my inquietudes renewed; I feared that our meeting there preſaged no good, and that there was too much reaſon for all my former ſuſpicions.

cions. He, on his ſide had not learnt the name of my benefactreſs, and Mr. de Climal had ſaid nothing to him of this project, he therefore did not know what to think, on ſeeing me in the midſt of this gentleman's family, introduced by Valville, whom he ſaw enter with me, and who, out of regard to his uncle, kept a reſpectful diſtance, as not being willing to let him know that we entered together. Who is that, cried Mr. de Climal; at the noiſe we made when coming in? It is the young perſon, brother, that you deſired to ſee, ſaid Mrs. de Valville; Come near, Marianne, added ſhe immediately.

THIS diſcourſe made me tremble from head to foot; I came near, however, with my eyes caſt down; I durſt not lift them upon the dying man, and was at a loſs to know how to do it. Ah! Miſs, is it you then? ſaid he, with a feeble and troubled voice, I am obliged to you for coming; pray ſit down. I took a chair, ſtill ſilent with down-caſt looks, and had yet ſeen only the bed; but a moment after, I lifted up my eyes a little higher, then higher ſtill, till at laſt I ſaw half his face, and ſoon after ſaw it entire; but this was only for an inſtant, for I was afraid he would take notice of my obſerving him, which might throw him into ſome confuſion, and mortify him too much; but this is certain, I obſerved not the leaſt appearance of malice in his countenance. Where is my nephew, ſaid Mr. de Climal? I am here, Sir, returned Valville, who modeſtly advanced to ſhew himſelf: ſtay here, ſaid he; and you, father, added he, addreſſing himſelf to the monk, do you be ſo kind as to ſtay; but as he did not mention Mrs. de Valville, who took notice of the exception his ſilence made to her, ſhe ſaid to him, Brother, I am going to give ſome orders; and immediately retired

into another chamber. As you pleaſe, ſiſter, returned he, as ſhe went out; this retreat that Mr. de Climal ſeemed to wiſh for, contributed to prove that I had nothing dreadful to fear; for if he had reſolved to ſay any thing to my prejudice, he would have detained my benefactreſs, whoſe preſence would have been neceſſary to ſuch a ſcene: and my mind was only filled with an extreme curioſity to know in what all this ceremony would terminate. Mrs. de Valville's going was followed by a ſhort ſilence. When after a deep ſigh, he began: I deſired you, father, ſaid he, turning to us, to be here this morning, but I have not yet told you the reaſons that induced me to ſend for you: I was deſirous too that my nephew ſhould be preſent; and he ought to be ſo, becauſe this young lady is chiefly concerned. Here he ſtopped to take breath, whilſt I bluſhed and trembled; and he went on thus: It was you, father, who introduced her to me; ſhe was in a ſituation that greatly expoſed her; you came to me to ſeek ſome aſſiſtance for her; you thought me an honeſt and upright man; but, father, you were deceived; I was not worthy of your confidence. As the monk ſeemed deſirous to ſtop him, by a motion he made for that purpoſe; Oh! father, reſumed he, addreſſing himſelf to him, in the name of that being, whoſe juſtice I would ſoften and diſarm, don't oppoſe the reſolution I have taken to ſet myſelf in a true light. You know the eſteem, and perhaps the veneration with which you have honoured me: you know the reputation I have publickly enjoyed: that I have been revered as a man of virtue and piety; but alas! I was only in ſhew and appearance, what I now ſincerely and from the bottom of my ſoul wiſh I had been in reality: Suffer me then to expiate my guilt,

guilt, if poſſible, by a confeſſion of that baſe, that hypocritical behaviour that has deceived you and the world. And let me take that ſhame and humiliation to myſelf I have deſerved: let me inſpire all that horror, that I ſhould formerly have raiſed in every breaſt, had the black marks of my ſecret guilt been diſcovered. Yes, father, (reſumed he, after a moment's pauſe; with eyes bathed in tears, and with a moſt moving tone;) this was the man whom you came to intruſt with this young lady; you made application to a vile, a wicked wretch; and all thoſe good actions you have ſeen me engaged in, are ſo many crimes which inhance my guilt; maſked under which I have committed the blackeſt, the moſt infamons actions. Enough, Sir, here is enough, returned father St. Vincent. Come, let us praiſe God for the ſentiments with which he inſpires you. What obligations have we to adore his goodneſs! how great, how incomprehenſible his mercy! how infinite his favours! Yes, Sir, you are very guilty, you have reaſon to renounce our eſteem, and the favourable opinion the world has conceived of you, to deſpiſe yourſelf, and be covered with ſhame; but we are not at a confeſſional, therefore compoſe yourſelf. It is not the ſinner, the man involved in guilt and miſery, that we eſteem and value; but the man, whom God regards and pities, and on whom he pours the plenitude of his mercies. May we end our lives in the ſame pious diſpoſition as you do. Mention no more your crimes; you have ſaid enough on this ſubject; for if your repentance be ſincere, that being who delights in mercy will forgive you. The good religious accompanied this diſcourſe with his tears, in which Valville and I joined. I have not yet ſaid all, father, returned Mr. de Climal. Pray have done replied the monk,

you

you need not go any farther; ſatisfy your ſelf with what you have already ſaid, for the reſt will be ſuperfluous, and would be perhaps a piece of indulgence: it is ſometimes ſweet and comfortable to abandon one's ſelf to a diſpoſition like yours. Well, Sir, deprive yourſelf of this conſolation: mortify the deſire you have of owning more of your faults; God will accept both of what you have ſaid, and what you deſire to ſay. Ah! father, cried the ſick gentleman, pray don't ſtop me; it would be a comfort to me to be able to bury my guilt in eternal ſilence; for I am far from taſting the ſweet ſatisfaction you deſcribe: God will not grant me ſo great a favour, who have merited nothing but indignation; it is enough if he gives me ſtrength to ſupport the deſerved confuſion with which I am covered. Yes, Sir, this confeſſion of my villainy loads me with ſhame; every word of it tortures me, and I thank God for enabling me thus to ſacrifice my deteſted pride. Permit me then to improve a ſhame that puniſhes me. O that I were able, if poſſible, to proportion my humiliation to my guilt, and the falſity of thoſe virtues with which I have been honoured. I am ſorry I have been obliged to ſend Mrs. de Valville away; for I ought to have bluſhed before a ſiſter, who is not yet perhaps undeceived: I know ſhe would have interrupted me; her affection and too great tenderneſs would not have permitted her to hear what I had to ſay. But do you, father, repeat it to her; this I deſire as an inſtance of your piety and regard for me. This young lady no doubt, told you the truth, in the recital ſhe made of my behaviour to her; and indeed my whole deſign in relieving her, was only in order to ſeduce her. Thinking that her misfortunes had depreſſed her mind, and taken from her the courage of daring

to

to remain virtuous amidſt ſuch complicated diſtreſs, I offered to ſecure her ſomething to live upon, on condition that ſhe would become unworthy of life. I made uſe of theſe baſe artifices in order to beat down and trample upon her young, and I hoped, unfortified virtue; to pollute a ſoul truly amiable. — But, father, I have ſaid enough, ſince I have given a ſufficient view into the ſhameful baſeneſs of my deſigns; deſigns which now fill me with horror; which affright and terrify me, and give a double gloom to the dreary proſpect that lies before me; new terrors more inſupportable than all the agonies of death. I beg pardon, Miſs, and conjure you, if poſſible, to forget this wicked adventure; and never ſtain your chaſte mind with the remembrance of my impudence and folly: accept of this acknowledgement as a reparation for a crime that has juſtly offended both God and you. When I left you, I had the baſeneſs to reproach you with the ſmall preſents which you returned me; I inſulted you with the diſmal ſituation to which I had abandoned you; and threatened you with revenge if you dared to complain of me.

I GAVE way to my tears, while he was making me this generous and chriſtian ſatisfaction; and was ſo touched, that I could not ſmother my ſighs. Valville and the monk wiped their eyes and remained ſilent; after a ſhort pauſe he reſumed. You know, Miſs, I then offered you a contract to pay you annually five or ſix hundred livres. I have now in my will given you twelve hundred. You refuſed with horror the ſix hundred livres, when I propoſed them as the recompenſe of a crime: accept now freely of the twelve hundred, as a reward for your virtue and prudence. It is juſt that I ſhould afford you in my repentance a greater aſſiſtance, than I offered you when involved in guilt. My

nephew

nephew there is my chief heir; he is generous, and I am perſuaded he will not at all regret what I have left you. Ah! dear, Sir, cried Valville, with the tears in his eyes, and a look expreſſive of the higheſt ſatisfaction; this is an action laudable indeed, and entirely worthy of yourſelf: all that afflicts me is, that you did not do this in perfect health. As for me, I ſhall regret nothing but you, and the loſs of that tenderneſs you expreſs for me; which I would gladly preſerve at the expence of the richeſt treaſures; and if God would grant my requeſt, I ſhould only deſire the ſatisfaction of ſeeing you live as long as myſelf. And I, Sir, cried I in my turn, with a deep ſigh, am ſo ſenſible of your kindneſs, that I am at a loſs to know how to expreſs myſelf. I aſſure you, were I poorer than I am, the preſent that you make me would not conſole me for your loſs, which I ſhall always look upon as a new misfortune. I ſee, Sir, that if your life was preſerved, you would be a ſincere friend to me; and I ſhould eſteem that an incomparably greater advantage than what you ſo generouſly leave me.——

My tears here ſtopped my voice, and he appeared ſenſibly touched at my diſcourſe. What you ſay, Miſs, returned he, after ſome moments ſilence, anſwers the good opinion, which I have always cheriſhed of your heart; and indeed, if God would prolong my life, I ſhould endeavour to deſerve the opinion you now entertain of me: I feel myſelf decay, and am entering upon a ſtate unknown, from which there is no return: but it is not for me to preſume to give you inſtructions for the conduct of your future life; ſince they would not proceed from a mouth ſufficiently pure: but ſince you think that in me you loſe a ſincere friend, I may be permitted under that character to mention

one

one thing: I have tempted you to forfeit your innocence; and it is not owing to the want of any endeavours on my ſide, that you have not been betrayed into a crime, that would have deſtroyed all your peace, all juſt ground for inward complacency, and that amiable rectitude of heart, which will ever render you an ornament to your ſex, and dear to all the lovers of virtue: let me intreat you, I ſay, to ſupplicate that being in my behalf, whom I have offended by offending you: to expreſs your forgiveneſs by petitioning his; and ſhew that I have left no taint upon your mind, by continually adhering to thoſe principles, which have ſupported you under my attacks: be virtuous in ſpight of all oppoſition, and you will find that "to be good is to be happy." Virtue will raiſe you above many of the miſeries of life; give you charms that time will not be able to efface; and render you for ever lovely; for ever bleſſed.——Adieu, Miſs! Adieu, father, added he, addreſſing himſelf to the monk, I recommend her to your care.——You ſee, nephew, why I have detained you: you have ſeen me at her feet, and may have ſuſpected, that it was agreeable to her: ſhe, you find, is innocent, and I thought myſelf obliged to let you know it.

He ſtopped here, and we were going to retire; when he ſaid, nephew, pray go to my ſiſter, and deſire her to come in. And then addreſſing himſelf to me, Miſs, ſaid he, Mrs. de Valville has told me how ſhe came to know you: in the recital that you made her of your ſufferings, and unhappy ſituation, you might naturally introduce into your mournful ſtory an account of the freſh injuries you had received from me; tell me freely, did not you inform her of it? did you name me? I will tell you the truth, Sir, returned I, a little embarraſſed

at

at his queſtion. When I left father St. Vincent, I entered into the parlour of the convent to beg aſſiſtance of the abbeſs: Mrs. de Valville, who was there, obſerved my deſpair; was moved at my tears, and preſſed me to tell her what afflicted me: I did not think of prejudicing you: I had nothing elſe to do but to raiſe her compaſſion; and for that end it was ſufficient to relate my misfortunes. However I did not mention your name at that time; not that I omitted it out of a regard for you, but becauſe I thought it unneceſſary; and ſhe would never have known more, if ſome days after, ſpeaking of the clothes I ſent back, I had not by chance named Mr. de Valville, to whom I ſent them, as the nephew of the perſon who had given them to me. Thus, Sir, you ſee how unhappily ſhe came to know it, and I am very ſorry for my imprudence: I proteſt I had no malice in it. I might indeed deceive you, but I am too nearly affected, and too grateful to hide any thing from you.

WELL, ſaid he, addreſſing himſelf to father St. Vincent; my ſiſter then knows it: I did not think it: This is a new increaſe of ſhame, a confuſion, father, that I am extremely ſenſible of. Miſs, added he, I thank you for it: Pray don't reproach yourſelf with it on any account. It is a piece of ſervice you have done me: my ſiſter knows me, and I am going to bluſh before her.

HERE I could hardly forbear making my grief be heard. My benefactreſs entered with Valville, and was ſurprized at my tears and ſighs, which her brother took notice of. Come, ſiſter, ſaid he, I ſhould have deſired you to ſtay here, had I not apprehended your tenderneſs would have prevented what I had to ſay. I know you would not have been able to bear it: however, father St. Vincent will

will be ſo good as to repeat it to you; and thank God you know the principal part of it already. This young lady has given you a juſt opinion of me. Father St. Vincent truſted her to my care; but ſhe could not have fallen into worſe hands. I reſign her into yours——To that friendſhip you appear to have for her, add all the tenderneſs you have for me, of which ſhe is much more worthy. That ſhare in your heart, which I have enjoyed, is a bleſſing I would leave her, and which will recompenſe the little honour and virtue ſhe found in mine.

Ah! dear, dear brother, pray forbear, returned Mrs. de Valville, who wept almoſt as much as I; pray let me intreat you to forbear: I am not able to hear more. Yes, I will take care of Marianne ——ſhe ſhall always be dear to me——you need not doubt it.——You give her a right to command my heart, which is diſpoſed to be eternally hers. But come, let us hear no more; you ſee the grief into which you have caſt us all. Pray conſider, you are not in a condition to talk much, it fatigues you. Pray how do you find yourſelf? Like one that muſt live no longer, ſaid he; I am going, ſiſter; adieu, father, remember me in your prayers, you know the need I have of them.

Scarce had he finiſhed theſe laſt words, when he fainted away, and we thought him expiring. Two phyſicians were called, who were waiting in another room; the monk retired immediately, and Valville and I were deſired to leave the chamber, while they endeavoured to aſſiſt him. Mrs. de Valville being reſolved not to go, we went into the parlour, where we found an intimate friend of Mr. de Climal's, and two ladies related to the family, going into the ſick gentleman's room. Valville prevented them by telling them his uncle

was

was ſenſeleſs, and that they muſt ſtay and wait the event, ſo that none went in but a clergyman, his confeſſor, who entered as he was talking to them.

VALVILLE, who was ſitting by me in the parlour, told me privately who theſe three perſons were, I mean Mr. de Climal's friend, and the two ladies his relations, one of whom was the mother, and the other the daughter. The friend was a gentleman grave and polite; he was a magiſtrate, and about ſixty years old. The mother of the young lady might be about fifty or fifty-five; ſhe was ſhort, but this deficiency was made up in her circumference, which was large enough; ſhe was of a dark complection and very ordinary; had a face large and bloated, with ſmall black eyes, which at firſt appeared lively, but indeed were only curious and buſy, always in motion, inceſſantly prying, and ſeeking out ſomething to amuſe an empty indolent mind, that has nothing in itſelf to entertain it: for ſome minds are inactive merely for want of ideas; it is this renders them ſo greedy of foreign objects, chiefly becauſe they retain no impreſſions, and every thing, as it were, runs through their minds, and immediately vaniſhes: they are always prying, ever liſtening, but never thinking of any thing.

SUCH was the woman I am ſpeaking of; yet I did not form ſo perfect an idea of her all at once; my reflections, though mature enough, could not extend ſo far; however I then formed a very diſagreeable idea of her character. She no ſooner ſaw me, but her eyes ruſhed upon me, and inſtantly ran over me; I ſay ruſhed, at the hazard of ſpeaking improperly, to deſcribe the greedy curioſity with which ſhe examined me. Such glances as theſe are exceſſively troubleſome; they quite confounded me, and I ſaw no

other

other remedy for them, but in my turn to ſtare upon her in the ſame manner: this frequently ſucceeds with ſome perſons, and frees people from a trouble like that which then diſturbed me. She then indeed took off her eyes; but it was only for a moment, and then returned more earneſtly than before. Sometimes ſhe examined my countenance, ſometimes my ſhape engaged her attention, then my cap, then my gown. I happened to cough, this redoubled her attention to obſerve how I coughed: I drew my handkerchief out of my pocket, this was a very intereſting ſpectacle for her, a new object of curioſity.

As Valville ſat pretty near her, ſhe ſuddenly turned to ſpeak to him, and ſaid, Who is this young lady? I heard her; for perſons of her diſpoſition never talk ſo low as they think they do: they are ſo inconſiderate, that they won't allow themſelves time to be diſcreet. She is the daughter of a country lady, one of my mother's moſt intimate friends, returned Valville very negligently. Hah, hah, a country lady! cried ſhe; is her mother in town? No, replied he again, this lady is in a convent in town. Hah! in a convent! what has ſhe a mind to be a nun? and what convent is it? Upon my word, ſaid he, I don't know the name of it: Perhaps ſhe has ſome relation there, purſued ſhe; ſhe is very pretty; very pretty indeed, added ſhe; interweaving each word with an earneſt examination of my perſon and dreſs. At laſt ſhe grew tired of me, and ſat herſelf to ſurvey the magiſtrate, whom, however, ſhe was no ſtranger to; but whoſe ſilence and melancholy appeared to her worthy of conſideration.

It is very ſhocking, Sir, ſaid ſhe to him immediately, that the gentleman ſhould be dying already; he was very well a few days ago: who would

would have thought it? It is but ten days ſince we dined together: but tell me, Mr. de Valville, is he very ill? he has a good conſtitution, I hope he will recover it: what do you think of it? How long has he been ſick? I have been in the country, and truly I did not hear of it before yeſterday. Is it true that he is ſpeechleſs, and has loſt his ſenſes? Yes, Madam, returned Valville, it is but too true. Mrs. de Valville, I ſuppoſe, is here? replied ſhe, poor woman! ſhe muſt be very diſconſolate, is not ſhe? they were very fond of each other—— he is a mighty worthy man, and all the family muſt be ſenſible of his loſs. Here is my girl has cried all day long for him, and I too indeed: The young lady really looked very much dejected, but ſaid not a word. Our eyes met ſometimes as if by ſtealth; and ſhe ſeemed to have as much friendſhip for me in her looks, as ſhe might have diſcovered for her in mine. I fancied ſhe liked me; and, for my part, I was charmed with her, and had great reaſon to be ſo.

NOTHING could appear more engaging than this lady; nothing more charming than the ſweetneſs and ſmiling vivacity of her looks: ſhe had a form embelliſhed with every thing lovely; an air graceful, delicate, eaſy; every charm triumphed in her face, and adorned her perſon with unutterable beauties. Her ſhape was perfectly genteel and finiſhed; her behaviour engaging, natural, and attended with ſomething inexpreſſibly pleaſing. She was but eighteen, and youth never appeared a greater ornament.

I HEARD it ſaid, Madam, the other day of a young lady that ſhe was in the ſpring of beauty; the term ſpring brought her I am ſpeaking of to my mind, and I dare lay a wager it was ſome

ſuch

ſuch blooming charms that gave birth to the expreſſion; for I never read of Flora or Hebe, but I think of Miſs de Fare, for this was her name.

She had a form tall, free, and ſprightly, and an air and ſtep ſo light, that you would have thought ſhe weighed nothing. In ſhort, ſhe was ſurrounded with the graces in all their various characters; had ſomething ſo noble and attractive, and that nobleneſs appeared ſo eaſy, unaffected, and natural, that it required no attention to ſuſtain it: Miſs de Fare had not a very ſtrong conſtitution, but her indiſpoſitions gave her an air more tender than ſickly. She would have been glad to have had a little more fat; but I don't think ſhe would have been any gainer by it: at leaſt no face could appear better without it. For I am certain it could have added but one charm; but muſt have taken from it many others more engaging and poignant. Notwithſtanding the delicacy and ſprightlineſs of her wit, ſhe voluntarily held her tongue in company; ſhe thought much, ſpoke little, and was ſo attentive that nothing eſcaped her notice. I hardly ever heard her ſay any thing but what was pertinent, judicious, and agreeable. When with friends ſhe expreſſed herſelf with the frankneſs of perſons of the moſt blunt diſpoſition, though with all the delicacy of the moſt polite. One could not help obſerving in her converſation a ſagacity of ſentiment, which was diſcovered in all ſhe ſaid, and which was expreſſed with the utmoſt life and ſpirit: her ideas appeared great and ſublime, her ſoul noble and generous, But you will know her character much better by what I ſhall mention hereafter.

We had been there a conſiderable time, when Mrs. de Valville came from her brother and told us that he was much better, and had perfectly recovered

vered his ſenſes. He aſked me, added ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to me, if you were here ſtill, Miſs; and deſired me not to ſend you back to your convent before you had dined with us. You both do me too much honour, returned I: I ſhall do what you pleaſe, Madam. I wiſh he knew that I am here, ſaid the magiſtrate his friend; for I have an extreme deſire to ſee him if poſſible. And I too, ſaid the lady, would it not be proper to let him know it? If he is better, he won't perhaps be ſorry to ſee us: What do you think of it, Madam? the phyſicians then have greater hopes of his recovery; I am ſincerely glad to hear it.—Alas! no, Madam, we have no ſuch flattering proſpect, returned Mrs. de Valville; he is not quite ſo bad, and that's all; but I will go to him immediately, to know if your coming in will be attended with any inconvenience. She ſcarce had left us, when we ſaw her returning with the phyſicians from the chamber. Gentlemen, ſaid ſhe, may this gentleman and theſe two ladies go in to ſee my brother? is he in a condition fit to receive them?——— He is weak ſtill, returned one of them, and wants reſt; it would be much better to ſtay two or three hours firſt. Oh to be ſure, we will defer it then, ſaid the magiſtrate, I will return in the afternoon: It will not be worth your while to go, replied Mrs. de Valville, you had much better ſtay dinner here. No, Madam, ſaid he, I am very much obliged to you; but I can't ſtay, I have ſome buſineſs to do. As for me, cried the lady, I have none; and I think it beſt to ſtay; am not I in the right, Madam? Well, gentlemen, continued ſhe, tell us then what you think of Mr. de Climal? it runs in my head that he will recover; Won't he? Don't you think his illneſs might proceed from ſome diſorder in his breaſt?

breaſt? Six months ago he had a cold which laſted a great while; I deſired him to take care of it; but he neglected it intirely. Is his fever high? It is not the fever that we are moſt afraid of, Madam, ſaid the other phyſician; we can give no certain judgment yet; but we think him in a very dangerous condition. After this diſcourſe they left us, the magiſtrate followed, and Mrs. de Fare and Miſs, Mrs. de Valville, her ſon, and I ſtayed in the parlour.

IT was pretty late, when a ſervant came to tell us dinner was ready. Mrs. de Valville went for a moment into her brother's room, and was told that he had dropped aſleep, on which ſhe immediately returned with the prieſt, who ſaid he would wait upon him again after dinner; and we ſat down to table ſomething leſs diſturbed than we had been in the morning.

I DON'T queſtion, Madam, but this particular detail has been diſagreeable to you; but I could not paſs it over, as it is neceſſary to introduce ſome more intereſting events. I ſat at table by Miſs de Fare, and I imagined by her graceful behaviour, that ſhe was glad of this occaſion to commence an acquaintance with me. We anticipated the pleaſures of friendſhip by a variety of thoſe little kindneſſes, which a mutual inclination ſuggeſts to two perſons who take a delight in each other. We looked upon each other with the ſweeteſt complacency; and as love has its rights too, I ſometimes caſt a tender regard at Valville, who on his ſide, according to cuſtom, had his eyes almoſt continually fixed upon me.

I BELIEVE Miſs de Fare took notice of our regards. Miſs, ſaid ſhe to me very low, whilſt her mother and Mrs. de Valville were talking together; I would not be miſtaken, but I don't

think you will leave Paris. I don't know what you mean, Miſs, returned I in the ſame tone, (and really I did not underſtand her at all,) but, I fancy, I may, without any riſque, venture to affirm that your thoughts are always juſt; will you pleaſe to tell me your meaning? It is, returned ſhe, whiſpering, that as my lady your mother is one of Mrs. de Valville's deareſt friends, you may perhaps marry my couſin; tell me now, am not I in the right?

It was not very eaſy to anſwer her; the queſtion diſcompoſed and alarmed me; I bluſhed, and then was afraid ſhe would take notice of it, and that this would betray a ſecret which would do me too much honour. In fine, I don't know what anſwer I ſhould have returned, if her mother had not extricated me out of this perplexity. It was then happy for me that ſhe was one of thoſe women, who obſerve every thing, and will be informed of every thing too. She perceived that we were talking to each other: What is that, daughter, ſaid ſhe: What ſubject are you upon? You ſmile and Miſs bluſhes; (for nothing eſcaped her;) may we know what you are ſaying? I ſhall make no ſecret of it, returned ſhe, I ſhould be charmed to have Miſs ſtay at Paris, and I was ſaying that I wiſhed ſhe might marry Mr. de Valville. Hah, hah, cried ſhe, that is very good: I have been juſt thinking ſo myſelf; beſides I have obſerved that neither of them ſeem as if they would be ſorry for it: but how do we know but it is their deſign, it looks very like it. And why not, ſaid Mrs. de Valville, with a look full of goodneſs, my ſon will have no reaſon to complain if it ſhould happen ſo. O Madam, every body muſt be of your opinion, replied Mrs. de Fare, we ought to congratulate him

him upon his happineſs; and I ſhall make my compliments upon it beforehand: I'll aſſure you I think no body can be more agreeably united. And I am ſure I ſhall envy no body's lot, returned Valville, with an air free and eaſy; whilſt I bowed to thank her for her civility without ſaying any thing; for I thought I ought to be ſilent, and give my benefactreſs an opportunity of ſpeaking for me; before whom I imagined that on this occaſion I ought to preſerve a modeſt and reſpectful ſilence. I could not however avoid giving her a look full of tenderneſs and gratitude. And though this converſation was carried on in jeſt, Mrs. de Fare did not doubt but that I ſhould marry Valville.

I MUST take my leave as ſoon as I have ſeen Mr. de Climal, and then we will conduct your daughter-in-law to her convent, ſaid ſhe to Mrs. de Valville. But hold, I have thought of ſomething better than that: I ſhall not lie to-night in town; I muſt return to my country-houſe, which, you know, is but about a mile from hence: I think if you can ſpare Miſs, you may write or ſend to the convent that they may not wait for her, and we will take her with us: Theſe ladies ought to become a little better acquainted; and I am ſure you will give both a very ſenſible pleaſure. Here Miſs de Fare joined her intreaties to thoſe of her mother with ſuch ſucceſs, that Mrs. de Valville told them ſhe conſented to it, and that I was my own miſtreſs. It is true, ſaid ſhe, you have no ſervant with you but you will find enough at Mrs. de Fare's. Go, I'll call at your convent, and to-morrow, if my brother's illneſs will permit me to leave him, I'll come about five in the evening, to bring you back, or elſe ſend for you. Since I have your permiſſion, Madam, ſaid I, I will make no difficulty of going.

HERE we aroſe from table. Valville appeared charmed at the little party we had juſt made, and I eaſily perceived the riſing joy which ſpread over his face, and ſufficiently expreſſed his inward ſatisfaction. What convincing proofs had my dear benefactreſs given us of the ſincerity of her promiſes! ſhe had not only acknowledged that I was deſigned for her ſon; but let me already reap ſome of the benefits that dear relation would ſhortly entitle me to; by recommending me to her friends, and introducing me into the world under that character: Was it poſſible to behave more agreeably, than thus to put in a manner out of her power to diſengage herſelf!

BUT let us leave Mr. de Climal's. Mrs. de Fare could not obtain leave to ſee him, becauſe he was inclined to doſe and was willing to take ſome reſt: when we were ready to go Valville artfully dropped, in his diſcourſe to this lady, ſome hints which obliged her to aſk him to follow us, and ſup with us at her houſe. The weather, Sir, ſaid ſhe, is extremely fine and you may, if you pleaſe, return to-night, or ſtay till to-morrow if you like it better. But will you, Madam, permit me to go ſaid he, ſmiling, addreſſing himſelf to his Mother, whoſe approbation he was willing to gain to all his actions. Yes, ſon, ſaid ſhe, go if you deſire it, for I ſhall not leave my brother till it is pretty late. Upon this we took our leave.

WE ſoon arrived at this lady's country-houſe, which was a ſtately building adorned with every thing that could render it grand and magnificent. Valville was there almoſt as ſoon as we, we reſted a moment, and then went into the garden, attended only by Miſs de Fare, where we ſpent our time in walking. Every thing here contributed to inſpire me with ſatisfaction and delight; the walks,

the

the fountains, and painted alcoves were very beautiful; but what rendred all theſe charming w:s the company of my dear Valville; for without him the ſhady groves would have appeared gloomy and ſolitary, and all this pleaſing ſcene, perhaps, have been paſſed over unregarded. I freely enjoyed the converſation of a man whom I loved with the tenderest affection, of a man who adored me, and who had the liberty of telling me ſo, and diſcourſing on his agreeable paſſion; a privilege I had not yet enjoyed without reſtraint; and I had an opportunity of making him a modeſt return, which I did not fail to do. He talked, I anſwered him with my looks, and his language was not more tender than my glances: he immediately perceived it, and his diſcourſe grew inſenſibly more paſſionate, and conſequently the innocent language of my eyes more ſweet. How delightful my ſituation! on the one ſide Valville, who almoſt idolized me; on the other Miſs de Fare, who loaded me with careſſes, and ſought every occaſion to inſpire me with friendſhip; and on my own ſide, a a heart full of ſenſibility for both. We all three walked into a wood which ſurrounded the houſe and garden, and left Mrs de Fare buſy in receiving two perſons who came to ſup with her: and as Valville's tenderneſs frequently interrupted this amiable lady's converſation, we out of a frolic ran away from him that we might have him at a diſtance, and threw at him handfuls of leaves and bows that we ſnatched from the trees and hedges: he purſued us; we ran; he ſeized me; ſhe came to my aſſiſtance, and my ſoul gave it ſelf up to an innocent joy too exquiſite to laſt long.

We were thus diverting our ſelves, when a ſervant came to tell us ſupper was ready and they on-

ly ſtaid for us: on which we went in immediately. At ſupper the converſation paſſed upon the news they heard from Mr. de Fare, who was in the army; at laſt they ſpoke of me, and the company loaded me with the moſt obliging compliments; for Mrs. de Fare had already informed them of my intended nuptials, and congratulated Valville on his approaching happineſs.

THE ſupper being over and the company gone, Mrs. de Fare invited Valville to ſtay till the next day, which he conſented to without much importunity. I am almoſt come to touch upon the fatal cataſtrophe which threatens me, and to-morrow I ſhall ſhed torrents of tears.

I AROSE between ten and eleven in the morning, about a quarter of an hour after Mrs. de Fare's woman came to dreſs me. However new this kind of ſervice was to me, I let her aſſiſt me with as good a grace, and as much freedom as if it had been familiar to me. I ought to ſupport my rank, and behave conſiſtent with my preſent circumſtances: this I was inſtantly ſenſible of. I had a natural taſte, or if you will, a vanity inexpreſſibly delicate, which taught me at once how to behave, and which gave this ſervant no room to think me a novice.

SCARCE had ſhe done dreſſing me, when I heard the voice of Miſs de Fare; ſhe was talking with another perſon: I imagined it was Valville, and was thinking to meet her, but ſhe did not give me time, but inſtantly came in. But, oh! Madam, gueſs with whom. I was immediately ſhocked as if I had been ſtruck with thunder. How inexpreſſible was my ſurpriſe and conſternation, when I ſaw it was the linen-draper with whom I had lived as a ſhop-maid! Miſs de Fare ran to embrace me with an air of of gaity, but this

fatal

fatal object, this unwelcome Mrs. du Tour, had already ſtruck my eyes, and turned me into a ſtatue; I received her embrace without motion, and with a countenance more pale than death, and was ſo overwhelmed with ſurpriſe that I knew not where I was. Ah my dear, what is the matter? why don't you ſpeak to me, cried Miſs de Fare, aſtoniſhed at my ſilence and want of motion. Odds my life, ſure I am dim-ſighted; is it you, Marianne? cried Mrs. du Tour; even ſo, the ſame poſitively———how folks meet! I came here to ſhew ſome linen to ſome of your neighbours that ſent for me; and ſo as I was about to return home, ſays I, I'll e'en call at Madam de Fare's to ſee if ſhe wants any thing. Sure it was my good angel that inſpired me with the thought of coming to your houſe. Here ſhe caſt her arms about my neck: what good fortune have you had? how pretty and well dreſſed you are! really I am glad to ſee you ſo ſpruce and fine; la! how it becomes you! I think indeed you have a waiting-woman; pray tell me how all this came to paſs: 'tis very wonderful; how, my dear girl, did it happen?

To this diſcourſe, I was unable to utter a word; I was quite abaſhed, and ſtupid with ſurpriſe. Here Valville came in ſmiling with an air of gaity, but he no ſooner ſaw Mrs. du Tour, but he bluſhed, changed countenance, and ſtood immoveable as well as I: you will judge that he might eaſily foreſee the fatal conſequence of this adventure; and all this paſſed in much leſs time than I can relate it to you.

Softly, Mrs. du Tour, ſoftly, cried the young lady, you are miſtaken ſurely, you don't know who you ſpeak to; it is not that Marianne you mean: Not her! ſaid the linen-draper, not

her! why you may as well tell me I am not Mrs. du Tour; marry, ask her your ſelf if I am in the wrong. Well, why don't you ſpeak child; is not it true that you are ſhe? did not you lodge a few days with me to learn my buſineſs? was not it Mr. de Climal that put you to board with me, and did not he abandon you one holiday? the better day the better deed, and did not care a fig what became of you: lack-a-day, how the poor orphan cried about it. Why I found her with her hair hanging about her ears like any mad, her cap and every thing littered about; la how I pitied the poor thing! Pray take care what you ſay, Madam, ſaid Miſs de Fare, quite aſtoniſhed: I tell you it cannot be; well, I don't ſay that it *can be*; continued Mrs. du Tour, but I ſay that *it is*, and that is as well: and I will tell you more than that, it was to Mr. de Valville that I ſent the bundle of clothes Mr. de Climal had given her; and beſides I have another token, I have ſtill a handkerchief that ſhe left behind her at my houſe; it is not worth much indeed, but however it is hers, and I have nothing to do with it; I have had it waſhed though it was hardly worth it. However one word is as good as a hundred, and as I am none of thoſe that are given to talk, and ſuch as that, look'ee, I tell you once for all that it is Marianne; that is the name ſhe went by when ſhe was with me, and if it is not her name ſtill, ſhe muſt have changed it; for I never knew ſhe had any other, nor ſhe neither: It was a country parſon's ſiſter that gave it her; for poor girl, ſhe don't know herſelf who ſhe is: ſhe told me of it, and I can't ſee what reaſon there is to make ſuch a mighty ſecret on't. Heaven knows I reſpect the girl, and would not do her an injury for the world. Surely I may be allowed to know folks again when I ſee them,

them, as well as another, eſpecially my own ſhop-maid; pray where is the difficulty of that; but marry-come-up, if ſhe is grown proud, and above owning her old acquaintance———what care I ———I can't anſwer for that; I only rub up her memory a little: I have nothing to ſay againſt her, and I always thought her very honeſt and good; and I am ſure no-body can ſpeak more handſomly of her than I do, if ſhe were a ducheſs.

At theſe laſt words, Mrs. de Fare's woman ſimpered and left us with an ill-natured pleaſure in her looks: as for me I was ready to faint, my knees trembled and I ſunk into an elbow-chair that ſtood near me; where I was only able to weep and caſt forth the moſt bitter ſighs. Miſs de Fare held down her head and ſaid nothing. Valville, who had not yet opened his mouth, at laſt drew near to Mrs. du Tour, and taking her by the hand, Madam, ſaid he, let me perſuade you to retire immediately: I conjure you do me this favour, dear Mrs. du Tour, oblige me in this, and you ſhall loſe nothing by it; be ſeen no more here; be diſcreet; and expect from me in return all the ſervice I can render you. Lack-a day, with all my heart, returned ſhe; I am very ſorry that I have ſaid any thing to diſpleaſe you; but I thought no harm: What would you have of me, I am no witch; put yourſelf in my place.——— Well, well, Madam, you are in the right, ſaid he, interrupting her; but pray be gone: Go, I intreat you. Your ſervant, Sir, returned ſhe, I beg pardon; Miſs, your ſervant, added ſhe, turning to Miſs de Fare. Adieu Marianne, farewel child, I wiſh you no more harm than I do myſelf; good luck attend you.———But, Miſs, if you would look at what I have got, perhaps you may take ſomething of me, added ſhe,

addreſſing herſelf to Miſs de Fare. No, no, I tell you, I ſhall buy all you have, and pay you for it to-morrow, returned Valville, puſhing her back, till at laſt ſhe left us.

My tears and ſighs continued; I durſt not lift up my eyes, and was oppreſſed with the ſevereſt affliction. Mr. de Valville, ſaid Miſs de Fare, who had for ſome time been ſilent, and had attended to all paſſed; pray explain to me what all this means? Oh! dear couſin, returned he, throwing himſelf at her feet; in the name of all that is moſt dear to you, ſave my life: it is nothing leſs I beg of you. I conjure you by all the goodneſs and generoſity of your heart, not to abandon me: it is true, the lady was a few days at this linen-draper's: ſhe loſt her father and mother in her infancy: it is believed that they were foreigners: it is an undoubted matter of fact that they were aſſaſſinated in a ſtage-coach, with a number of their domeſtics; their retinue only proved they were perſons of quality: this lady was drawn from under the body of her mother; was educated by a clergyman in the country; brought up to Paris by his ſiſter, who died there and left her quite deſtitute: a monk preſented her to my uncle: I came to know her by chance, and I love and adore her. If I loſe her, I loſe my life: I have already told you that her parents travelled with ſervants of both ſexes: ſhe is a lady of quality; no body has ever doubted it: her perſon, her graceful behaviour, and her amiable character are additional proofs of it. Perhaps her extraction is ſuperior to mine; perhaps if it was known, I ſhould be too much honoured with her tenderneſs. My mother knows all that I have told you, and much more that I have not time to relate. She is raviſhed with her; ſhe placed her in a convent; ſhe conſents that

that I ſhould love her; ſhe conſents that I ſhould marry her; and you deſerve to be acquainted with it too. You have a ſoul too great to render you capable of making an ill uſe of the fatal accident, which conceals her birth: you can't look upon her misfortune as a crime; a misfortune, accompanied with ſuch circumſtances as I have related, ought not to deprive a lady, ſo lovely, of the rank to which it plainly appears ſhe was born; nor of the regard and reſpect ſhe merits from every honeſt, every worthy perſon. Preſerve then your eſteem and friendſhip for her. Preſerve me my wife; preſerve to yourſelf a friend, worthy a place in your affection: a friend, whoſe innate goodneſs and unſpotted honour will ever render her invaluable: a ſoul which you will make eternally yours; beſides mine, whoſe gratitude ſhall know no bounds. But it is not enough not to divulge our ſecret: you had here a ſervant juſt now who heard all; we muſt gain her over to our party, and we muſt be expeditious.

THAT is what I was thinking of, ſaid Miſs de Fare, who interrupted him to ring the bell. Compoſe yourſelf, Sir, I ſhall remedy that immediately, truſt all to me and fear nothing. Your ſtory has moved me even to tears: I have always had a very high eſteem for you; but you have now inſpired me with a thouſand times more. I look upon Mrs. de Valville's conduct on this occaſion, as quite admirable and worthy of herſelf: I can't tell you how much I love her for it; nor ſhall my heart ever be out-done by hers in generoſity and affection. My dear friend, added ſhe, turning to me with a look full of tenderneſs, wipe away your tears, and let us think of nothing but of being united by a friendſhip, which will laſt as long as ourſelves.

Here ſhe preſented me her hand, I took hold of it, kiſſed it, and bathed it with my tears, with a ſupplicating air, mingled with gratitude and affection, but without any appearance of being humbled. The friendſhip that you do me the honour to aſk, ſhall be dearer to me than my life; I only deſire to live for you and Valville, replied I, intermingled with ſighs, which my tenderneſs forced from me.

I WAS unable to ſay more, Miſs de Fare wept as ſhe embraced me, and was ſurpriſed in that poſture by the ſervant I have mentioned, who was come to know why ſhe rung the bell. Come hither, Favier, ſaid ſhe, in a commanding tone, you have an affection for me, at leaſt I think ſo: but however you have ſeen what has paſſed between du Tour and us: obſerve what I ſay, I will certainly ruin you one time or other if ever you mention a ſingle word of it: but on the other hand I promiſe to make your fortune, as a reward of your ſilence. And I promiſe, on that condition, ſaid Valville, ſhe ſhall partake of mine. Favier, with bluſhes that ſhe could not conceal, aſſured us ſhe would hold her tongue: but it was too late, ſhe had already diſburthened herſelf of the ſecret. But it is time to break off. I muſt make you wait till you receive the ſixth part, before you ſee the events her indiſcretion occaſioned. I ſoon began to be looked on as perſon of ſome conſequence; and people of the higheſt rank were brought over to oppoſe my happineſs and cruſh my hopes. I intended before I had gone thus far to have given you the hiſtory of my friend the nun; but I find I muſt defer it.

The End of the FIFTH PART.

THE

THE VIRTUOUS ORPHAN.

PART VI.

YOU ſee here, Madam, the ſixth part of my life. Don't my being ſo extraordinary expeditious a little ſurpriſe you? You have not yet, I fancy, quite read over the fifth: How lazy is this! come, Madam, endeavour to follow me, and read at leaſt as faſt as I write. You tell me you have obliged many of your friends by giving them my adventures to read. Some you ſay were quite charmed with my reflections, and others would have been as well pleaſed without them. I am at preſent pretty much in the ſame diſpoſition as the latter; and ſhall, perhaps, give leſs reaſon for theſe perſons to think me tedious. My nun will not be quite ſo impertinent as I have been, and you may depend upon it, I will follow her example. But I ſhould conſider that my charging myſelf with impertinence, is paying but an ill complement to thoſe worthy perſons, who approve and admire my reflections; for if they have been mere idle trifling, they certainly were highly to blame to be ſo delighted with them; and were ſo far without true taſte, and indeed, in deference to their ſuperior judgment, I ought to retract what I have ſaid, and not be quite ſo ſevere upon myſelf. But I would not

have you miſtake me, Madam, when I call myſelf an impertinent: between you and I, it is only in jeſt; beſides a little complaiſance for thoſe that think me ſo. You do me a great deal of honour, in approving my manner of writing, and requeſting me to continue my reflections, and I am highly ſenſible of your goodneſs in being ſo laviſh of your compliments on that occaſion. But thoſe who deſire me to keep a bare recital of facts, give me a great deal of pleaſure; my ſelf-love declares for you; but my lazineſs openly declares for them. However, I think upon the whole, it will be a commendable piece of ambition to endeavour to pleaſe you both: I ſhall therefore not quite leave reflecting, tho' I ſhall do it ſeldomer, and endeavour to reduce theſe ſtarts of fancy into as little compaſs as poſſible.

We broke off at the diſcourſe Miſs de Fare and Valville addreſſed to Favier; and I have told you that the precaution they took proved to no purpoſe. You remember Favier retired before Mrs. du Tour left the room, and ſhe had not diſappeared above a quarter of an hour before her return; but that quarter of an hour ſhe had employed againſt me. She had no ſooner left my chamber, but ſhe haſted to Mrs. de Fare's, to whom ſhe related all ſhe had heard. She durſt not indeed confeſs, that ſhe had done ſo; Miſs de Fare ſpoke to her in a tone, which made her tremble, and prevented her being ſincere enough to confeſs it. I obſerved, that ſhe coloured, as I have already ſaid; and notwithſtanding my own confuſion, I could not help dreading that that was the cauſe ſhe left us, in a manner that ſhewed ſhe was very much diſconcerted, and Miſs de Fare began again to endeavour to conſole me; I held her hand, which I bathed with my tears, whilſt ſhe returned this tender action, with the

moſt

moſt affectionate careſſes. Oh! my deareſt friend, why do you weep thus, ſaid ſhe? what can you fear? I am perſuaded ſhe will not mention a word; we have juſt engaged her by the moſt powerful motives to be ſilent. I have told her, that her indiſcretion will ruin her, that her ſilence will make her fortune; and after the threatnings with which I have intimidated, her after the rewards I have promiſed her, can you imagine that ſhe will dare to open her mouth to your prejudice? is there the leaſt appearance that ſhe will ever betray us? compoſe your ſelf then; give me this mark of your friendſhip and confidence; or ſhall I believe that I am the cauſe of your tears? ſhall I think that you bluſh at having me a witneſs of what is paſſed, and that you ſuſpect my having ſome ſentiments that will humble you? Can you thus injure my friendſhip, which unites me to you by the ſtrongeſt ties, which makes me intereſt my ſelf in your affairs, and increaſes my regard for you in proportion to your affliction. I muſt believe this is the caſe, and if it be, what greater reaſon can I have to complain of your injuſtice; how injurious, how diſobliging, is this to a heart like mine!

THIS diſcourſe redoubled my tenderneſs, and conſequently my tears; I had not the power to ſpeak; but I preſſed her hand between mine, and kiſſed it a thouſand times as an expreſſion of my gratitude. Pray, my dear Marianne, forbear, ſaid Valville; ſome body may come in; Mrs. de Fare her ſelf may ſurprize us; and what muſt ſhe think if ſhe finds you in this condition? what reaſon can we give her for it? and why do you afflict your ſelf ſo? it can have no ill conſequence, take my word for it, added he, caſting himſelf at my feet, with a more paſſionate air, and more affection in his looks, than methought I had ever diſcovered.

Whilſt

Whilſt my regards, which I ſucceſſively caſt on the friend and the lover, expreſſed how ſenſible I was of their kindneſs, in thus endeavouring to give me the ſweeteſt conſolation; when we heard ſome ſteps coming near the room.

It was Mrs. de Fare, who entered a moment after. Her daughter and Valville placed themſelves on each ſide me; and I had juſt time to wipe away my tears before ſhe appeared; but every impreſſion of thoſe emotions with which I had been agitated, remained ſtill on my countenance; there might be ſeen an air of grief and conſternation, which I could not remove. Pretend to be ſick, ſaid Miſs de Fare haſtily; and we will ſay, that you were ſuddenly taken ill. Scarce had ſhe ſaid theſe words before we ſaw her mother. I only ſaluted her with a bow, becauſe of the ſudden illneſs we had agreed I ſhould affect, and which indeed was true enough. She looked at me without ſaluting me.

What, is ſhe indiſpoſed? ſaid ſhe, to Valville, with an unconcerned and uncivil air. Yes, Madam, returned he, we had ſome difficulty to recover the lady from a fainting fit, with which ſhe was ſeized; ſhe is ſtill extremely weak, added Miſs de Fare, who ſeemed much ſurprized at the little ceremony her mother uſed in ſpeaking of me. But, returned the lady in the ſame unconcerned tone, without ever calling me Miſs; if ſhe has a mind, we will ſend her back to Paris; I will lend her my coach. Madam, ſaid Valville, roughly, we don't want your coach; ſhe ſhall return in mine, which is come for me. —— You are in the right, ſaid ſhe, it is equal to me. —— What now! mother, cried her daughter: I did not think ſhe was to go ſo ſoon; I think ſhe ſhould ſtay a little longer. ——No, Miſs, ſaid I, then in my turn, leaning

leaning upon Valville's arm to ariſe; no, let me go, I give you a thouſand thanks for your care of me; but indeed I had better retire, ſince I find I can't ſtay here much longer. Let us go down, Sir, I ſhall be glad to take a little air, till your coach is ready. But, mother, ſaid Miſs de Fare, again, pray conſider a little, ſhould we let the lady return home alone in the coach? and ſince ſhe is abſolutely reſolved to leave us, ſhould not we wait upon her, or at leaſt I ſhould have one of your maids with me, to conduct her to the convent, or to Mrs. de Valville's, who committed her to your care? or elſe there will be none to accompany her but my couſin, and you know that would not be very proper. No, returned her mother; but, Mr. de Valville, added ſhe, ſmiling; I expect company; and as neither my daughter nor I can go, will not one of my maids do? She may have her that dreſſed her. It is but a ſtep to Paris. Won't that do, child? ſaid ſhe turning to me. Valville, enraged at her blunt and rude behaviour, made no anſwer. I want no body, Madam, ſaid I, fully perſuaded that the woman ſhe offered me had told her every thing; I have no need of any body.——This I ſaid, as I was leaving the room with Valville; while Miſs de Fare caſt down her eyes with an air of aſtoniſhment, that was not to the honour of her mother. Madam, ſaid Valville to Mrs. de Fare, with a tone ſharp and ſlighting; the lady ſhall take my coach; you have offered her yours; you need only lend it me to follow her. The condition ſhe is in diſturbs me; ſo that if any thing happens, I ſhall be near enough to give her ſome aſſiſtance. What need you leave us, ſaid ſhe ſmiling? I don't ſee any neceſſity for that, ſince I offer to ſend one of my ſervants with her. Perhaps, ſhe may like better to ſtay; you know that at five Mrs. de Valville

ville is to come and take her away in her coach; and as ſhe is indiſpoſed and I have company, ſhe may dine in her chamber here.

YES, ſaid he, the expedient is commodious enough, but I don't think it can be agreeable to her. Your ſeriouſneſs is very diverting, returned ſhe; but, however, if there is no way to keep you, my coach is at your ſervice.———Bourguignon, added ſhe, immediately ſpeaking to a footman, who paſſed by the chamber door; order them to put the horſes to the coach. I think I ſee company coming. Farewel, Sir, but 'tis very ill-natured of you to leave us; my pretty child, your ſervant; you will ſoon recover; make her ſtay breakfaſt before ſhe goes. On this ſhe took her leave of us; then turning to Miſs de Fare; Come, daughter, ſaid ſhe, come, I want to ſpeak to you.

PRESENTLY, Madam, I am coming, returned ſhe, looking upon Valville and me, with a ſad and melancholy countenance. I don't know what to make of this behaviour, rejoined ſhe addreſſing her diſcourſe to us, it don't at all reſemble what paſt laſt night. What can be the cauſe? has that impudent wretch already told her? I can hardly believe it. You need not doubt it, returned Valville, who had given orders for the coach: but no matter, Mrs. de Fare knows how much my mother intereſts herſelf in all that concerns this lady; and whatever ſhe has been informed of, it can't make her diſpenſe with the regard and polite behaviour ſhe ought always to preſerve for her. Beſides, what advantage can ſhe propoſe to her ſelf, by behaving ill to a perſon, for whom ſhe ſees both my mother and I have ſuch a ſincere reſpect? might not this linnen draper, whoſe diſcourſe ſhe has heard repeated to her, be miſtaken and take this

this lady for another? has Miſs anſwered her a word? has ſhe confirmed what has been ſaid? it is true ſhe wept; but that was perhaps only becauſe ſhe feared her doing her an injury; it was ſurpriſe, or timidity, and all this is very poſſible in a perſon of her age, who ſees herſelf accoſted with ſo much rudeneſs. It is not to you, couſin, that I have made uſe of this addreſs; you know with what confidence I have delivered myſelf into your power. I would only ſay that Mrs. de Fare ought at leaſt to ſuſpend her judgment, and not report upon the word of her woman, who may have heard things wrong; who may have added to what ſhe has heard; and who has only learnt it from another woman, who, as I have already ſaid, may have been deceived by a reſemblance: and even ſuppoſing ſhe could not be deceived, it is an affair of ſuch conſequence as requires her to take ſome pains to clear it up, and put it beyond all doubt; and eſpecially as there may be an infinite number of circumſtances, which may change conſiderably the face of things, as in particular thoſe I have mentioned to you, and make it appear that this lady has reaſon to reſent her treatment; but which can give her no right to treat her as ſhe has done.

You can't imagine, Madam, with what ſpirit and concern Valville uttered this; nor with what tenderneſs for me he expreſſed all he ſaid. If Mrs. de Fare had your great mind, if ſhe had your way of thinking, Miſs, added he, I ſhould readily have confeſſed every thing to her; but I forebore to do it: it would be a confidence you will permit me to ſay, which would not be fit to repoſe in a mind like hers. However, Miſs, ſhe loves you; you have ſome power over her; endeavour to prevail upon her to be ſilent; tell her that my mother begs it of her as a favour, and that ſhe can't refuſe it without declaring

declaring her ſelf our common enemy, and raiſing ſuch a perſonal quarrel as will never be made up. In ſhort, my dear couſin, tell her how much you are intereſted in our happineſs, and what uneaſineſs ſhe will give you, if ſhe does not keep it ſecret. Don't diſturb yourſelf at all, Sir, returned Miſs de Fare, ſhe ſhall be ſilent I will promiſe you, I am going to throw my ſelf on my knees to beg it of her, and I hope I ſhall not do it in vain; but this was expreſſed with ſuch a tone, as ſhewed ſhe wiſhed rather than hoped for ſucceſs.

WHILST they were diſcourſing thus I ſighed, and was under the greateſt conſternation: There is no remedy, cried I, all is loſt! and indeed, who would not have thought that this event would have broke off our marriage, and have raiſed inſuperable obſtacles to it? If Mrs. de Valville ſhould ſurmount them all, ſaid I to myſelf; if ſhe has reſolution enough to do it; can I have the confidence to abuſe her goodneſs, to expoſe her to all the blame, all the reproach, which ſhe will draw upon her ſelf from her whole family? can that be a happineſs to me, which muſt terminate in being a ſubject of ſhame and repentance to her? This is what paſſed in my mind on a ſuppoſition even that Mrs. de Valville could not be overcome, and that ſhe would inflexibly adhere to her attachment to me, notwithſtanding all the ignominy with which I ſhould be loaded, if this adventure ſhould become public as to all appearance it would.

THE two coaches arrived in the court: Miſs de Fare embraced me; ſhe held me for a long time in her arms; from whence I could hardly diſengage myſelf; and I got into Valville's coach with the tears in my eyes; turned out as it were with contempt and ſcorn from a houſe in which I had been treated the day before with the utmoſt

utmoſt reſpect. The coach drove away: Valville followed me in the other; we were ſometimes abreaſt and then we talked to each other: he affected a gaity which he was far from having, and as ſoon as his coach was pretty near to mine, Do you think ſtill of what has paſſed? ſaid he to me very low, and putting out his head; for my part, added he, nothing makes me uneaſy, but the trouble it gives you. No, no, Sir, returned I, you are not ſo indifferent as you pretend to be; you know it is an affair of conſequence; and the leſs you are ſenſible of it, the more it merits my concern: we can't continue the converſation, returned he, but would you enter into your convent directly; don't you think you ſhould ſee my mother firſt? No, I had better not, ſaid I, you know the condition in which we left Mr. de Climal. Mrs. de Valville is now perhaps overwhelmed with affliction; ſo I think it better to go immediately to the convent.——I think ſaid Valville, I ſee my mother's coach at a diſtance; he was not deceived, Mrs. de Valville had ſent it much ſooner than ſhe had promiſed, to inform her ſon that Mr. de Climal was dead.

He received this news with a viſible concern; and it affected me extremely: the laſt actions of his life had rendered him dear to me; and I wept very ſincerely.

I then got out of Valville's coach, to whom I left it; he ſent back Mrs. de Fare's, and I ſtept into Mrs. de Valville's, and ordered the coachman to drive me to the convent, where I arrived very much dejected; a variety of diſpleaſing reflections revolving in my mind.

I was three days without ſeeing any body from Mrs. de Valville: the fourth in the morning a ſervant came to tell me that ſhe had been indiſpoſed,

but

but that I ſhould ſee her the next day, and juſt then as I was leaving this domeſtic, he drew ſecretly a letter out of his pocket which Valville had ordered him to deliver to me, and which I went to read in my chamber.

I HAVE not told my mother the accident that happened to you at Mrs. de Fare's, ſaid he, perhaps that lady will be diſcreet if it be only to oblige her daughter, who will uſe all her intereſt to prevail upon her to be ſo: and with theſe hopes I thought I ought to hide from my mother an adventure which ſhe had much better be ignorant of, if poſſible: ſince the diſcovery would only ſerve to diſquiet and make her uneaſy. She tells me ſhe will ſee you to-morrow. I have ſpoke to Mrs. du Tour, and engaged her in our intereſt: nothing has yet been divulged: pray take care on your ſide not to mention a ſyllable of it. This was pretty near the ſubſtance of his letter, which I read, ſhaking my head at the article which recommended me to be ſilent.

I CAN'T be of your opinion, ſaid I to my ſelf, it would not be generous in me to conceal any thing that concerns her to whom I am under ſuch vaſt obligations; it would be a kind of treachery and deceit, which Mrs. de Valville ought never to find me guilty of, as well as a breach of our mutual confidence; and I cannot reſolve upon ſo ungrateful a piece of diſſimulation; I think I ought to declare all to her, whatever it coſt me. Tho' theſe were my thoughts, I was not however yet determined how to act; that unfriendly reſerve Valville adviſed me to make uſe of to my dear benefactreſs, was very contrary to my apparent duty to her, ſo that I remained till the next day very much diſturbed, and without taking any reſolution at all. At three in the afternoon I was told Mrs. de Valville was come, and I went to her into the parlour

parlour with an emotion which ſprung from ſeveral motives.

Shall I be ſilent, ſaid I to myſelf as I went? it is certainly the ſafeſt way, though not the moſt honeſt; I can't help thinking it baſe and ungenerous. Shall I ſpeak? ſurely it is the moſt worthy and noble reſolution I can take, but at the ſame time it is the moſt dangerous. My caſe however was very urgent, I ought immediately to have fixed upon ſomething, but I was in Mrs. de Valville's preſence before I had come to any determination. It is ſometimes difficult to chuſe between our inclinations and our duty. On the one hand, I was in danger of robbing my heart of its deareſt treaſure, the affections of Valville, and all that happineſs I ſhould experience in being united to a man I loved ſo tenderly. I did not at all think of his riches, or of the rank to which he would raiſe me: when we love ſincerely, our hearts are only taken up with that all powerful paſſion; it abſorbs every other conſideration, any thing elſe, however important, would not have made me heſitate a moment. My dear benefactreſs had a right to be informed of a thing, in which ſhe herſelf was ſo much concerned, and which might poſſibly be attended with many inconveniencies.

My dear, ſaid ſhe, as ſoon as ſhe ſaw me, I have brought you a deed of twelve hundred livres a year, that belongs to you; it has all the requiſite forms, take my word for it; my brother has left it you: My ſon, who is his heir, will loſe nothing by it; ſince he is to marry you, he will have it again: but no matter, take it; it is yours, and I had rather a great deal he ſhould receive it from you than his uncle.——How charming was this beginning! Dear Madam, cried I, with a grateful tenderneſs in my looks, what touches me the

neareſt

nearest in this, is your manner of treating me. How many are the obligations I am under to you! Is there any thing of equal value with the tenderness with which you honour me? You know, dear Madam, I love Mr. de Valville; but still my heart is more yours than his——my gratitude to you is dearer to me than my love. Here I began to weep. Your gratitude, my dear, said she, gives me a deal of pleasure; but I shall never desire any other from you, than such as a daughter owes to a tender mother. Such is the gratitude I expect from you. Remember it is not a stranger, but my daughter that I love: you will soon be perfectly so; and I confess I now wish it more than you do. I grow old, I have just lost the only brother I had left: I find I become every day more indifferent to this life, and all the happiness I propose to myself here, is to have you near me; and indeed, child, I can't tell how to live without you. My tears began again to flow at this moving discourse. In a few days I shall take you away from hence, added she, for I have already provided a place for you in another convent. Are you satisfied with Mrs. de Fare? I have not seen her since you were at my brother's; she came to visit me yesterday, but I was indisposed and saw no company. Was there any thing more said upon your marriage with Valville? No, mamma, there was very little said of it, returned I, confused and penetrated with so many marks of her tenderness; and I can't presume to hope they will speak of it any more in such an agreeable manner as they have done. How! what do you mean, replied she; Why do you talk so? do you suspect my coachman's discretion? it was not in his power, child, to betray us.——Has Mr. de Valville then told you nothing, Madam, returned I? No,

he con-

ſaid ſhe, what has happened, pray? All my hopes are loſt; I am undone, Madam; Mrs. de Fare knows who I am, replied I: Hah! who told her, cried ſhe? how did ſhe come to know it? By the moſt unhappy accident in the world, returned I; the linen-draper, with whom I lived ſome days, unfortunately came thither to offer ſome goods to ſale, and there ſhe found me. I am very ſorry for it, ſaid ſhe; nothing could have happened worſe: but did ſhe know thee? Pray, child, make haſte to tell me what paſſed? O yes, ſhe knew me immediately, returned I; ſhe embraced me with that familiarity which ſhe thought ſhe had a title to; appeared ſurprized to ſee me ſo well dreſſed; called me nothing but Marianne; and when ſhe was told ſhe was miſtaken, and took me for another perſon, ſhe inſiſted upon the contrary, and to ſupport what ſhe ſaid, mentioned a great many circumſtances; which muſt entirely diſcourage you hinder you from concluding our marriage, and deprive me of the happineſs of having you indeed for my mother. This happened in my room; Miſs de Fare was preſent: ſhe indeed has a mind perfectly great and generous, and to her Mr. de Valville related every thing; ſhe has ſhewn me neither leſs reſpect nor friendſhip; on the contrary, ſhe promiſed to keep it an eternal ſecret, and neglected nothing in order to conſole me. But I am born to be ſo unhappy, Madam, that her generoſity can be of no ſervice to me. Is that all? don't afflict yourſelf ſo, interrupted ſhe; if it is only known to Miſs de Fare, I am eaſy and all is well; we may ſafely confide in her, and you were to blame to ſay Mrs. de Fare knows it; I dare ſay her daughter will never mention it to her; and ſhe is the only woman I ſhould have been afraid of. But alas! mamma, returned I, Mrs. de Fare does

know it; her woman was in the room, and heard all that the linen-draper ſaid, and has repeated every thing to her; and what perſuades us to believe ſo, is, that that lady, who came into the room preſently after, did not treat me with ſuch reſpect as ſhe had done the day before; her behaviour was quite changed. Dear Madam, I am obliged to confeſs this to you: I could not be ſo perfidious as to hide it. You have been ſo kind as to ſay, that I am the daughter of one of your moſt intimate friends in the country; but you can no longer make uſe of that expedient. Mrs. de Fare knows that I am only a poor orphan, or at leaſt that I don't know who brought me into the world, and that it was out of mere charity that Mr. de Climal placed me with Mrs. du Tour. This is what you muſt regulate your deſigns by, and what I thought my duty to inform you of. Mr. de Valville has not told you of it; but the reaſon is, becauſe he loves me, and fears that this will make you withdraw your conſent to our nuptials: you muſt pardon him; he is your ſon; and this is a liberty that he has a greater right to take with you, becauſe no body is ſo nearly concerned in this adventure as himſelf; he would ſuffer moſt indeed, as he would be my husband: but I, who would reap all the advantages of it, ought not to be prevailed upon to obtain it by any means, that can be prejudicial to you. I, whom you have loaded with benefits, and who owe the title of your daughter to the boundleſs goodneſs and generoſity of your heart, have not the ſame privileges as Mr. de Valville; I imagine it would be unpardonable in me to uſe any deceit with you, and to conceal from you a circumſtance, which, to all appearance, will diſſuade you from the reſolution of marrying us: a happineſs too great for me reaſonably to expect.

Mrs. de Valville, while I ſpoke thus, looked upon me with an eager attention; the motives of which I could not penetrate: ſhe ſeemed as if loſt in thought; and by the air with which ſhe fixed her eyes on me, rather examined than liſtened to me. I reſumed:

You were deſirous of taking ſuch meaſures as would have prevented my being known; but now thoſe precautions are uſeleſs. Probably Mrs. de Fare will tell every thing, in ſpight of all that her daughter can ſay to conjure her to forbear: See, dear Madam, what would be the caſe of your daughter-in-law, if I ſhould marry Valville: I ſhall never be comforted for the loſs of that happineſs you have ſo much reaſon to deprive me of: but I ſhould find leſs comfort ſtill were I able to deceive you.

Mrs. de Valville was ſome moments without anſwering me; ſhe appeared more thoughtful than ſad; at laſt, after a ſigh, ſhe ſaid: My dear child, you both afflict and charm me; I muſt confeſs that thy ill-fortune is very obſtinate. Is there no way to engage Mrs. du Tour to ſay ſhe was miſtaken, without my appearing in it? Pray tell me what anſwer you made her. None at all, Madam, returned I, I was unable to ſpeak; my tears ſtopped my voice, while Miſs de Fare continued telling her, that ſhe did not know me. Poor child! returned Mrs. de Valville; no, no, I knew nothing of all this; my ſon would have been far from informing me of it; and, as you ſay, he is very excuſable; and perhaps he has even deſired you not to mention it to me. Yes, Madam, returned I, he loves me you know, and that is his excuſe; it was but yeſterday that he deſired me to be ſilent. How, yeſterday! cried ſhe; did he come to ſee you then? No, Madam, returned I, but he wrote to me: I

beg you would not let him know that I told you of it. The footman you ſent yeſterday brought me this ſhort letter from him: and I immediately gave it her, and ſhe read it.

I CAN'T blame my ſon, ſaid ſhe, after ſhe had read it; but thou art a ſurpriſing girl, and he has reaſon to love thee. Here, added ſhe, giving me the letter; if men were wiſe enough to value perſons according to their real worth, there would not be one who would not envy his conqueſt: our pride makes us pique ourſelves upon what is little and deſpicable in compariſon of what thou doſt now. Thou waſt never more worthy of the conſent I have given to Valville's love, and I can't recal it; my dear, I can never recal it: Whatever it coſt me, I am reſolved to keep my word. I will have thee live with me; thou ſhalt be my comfort and the happineſs of my declining life: thou haſt given me a diſtaſte to all other girls, which can be offered him: none but thee can be tolerable to me. Leave the management of every thing to me. If Mrs. de Fare, who indeed is one of the moſt weak and ſilly women I ever knew; if ſhe, I ſay, has divulged nothing yet, which is hardly to be believed in a perſon of her character; I will write to her to-night in ſuch a manner as ſhall engage her to be ſilent: however as ſhe is only very weak, not ill-natured, I'll pay her a viſit, and relate your whole hiſtory to her. She is of an inquiſitive diſpoſition; ſhe loves to be made a confidante; I'll make her ours, and ſo much oblige her by it, that ſhe will be the firſt to commend my attachment to thee; and will conceive as high an opinion of thy extraction as I do. And ſuppoſing ſhe has already been indiſcreet, you have no reaſon to make yourſelf uneaſy about it; we may think of an expedient to remedy it. I need only ſhelter myſelf from pub-

lic

lic cenſure, and give them no apparent reaſon to caſt the blame upon me. Valville is young, and much in love, and thou art extremely amiable, and capable of captivating the hearts of the moſt wiſe and prudent. If then my ſon marries thee, and the world can be convinced it was againſt my conſent; he alone will be blamed, and his youth and your beauty will plead his excuſe: It is pretty well known I am good-natured: I ſhall not fail to appear very angry; but at laſt I ſhall be reconciled and forgive all — you know what I mean, Marianne, added ſhe, ſmiling.

So much goodneſs deprived me of the power of anſwering her in any other language but that of ecſtaſy: I ſeized her hand, with which ſhe happened to be holding one of the bars of the grate. I wept for joy; tranſported with gratitude and tenderneſs, I ſeemed beſides myſelf: My dear, my kind and indulgent Mamma, cried I, how raviſhing, how tranſporting is this inſtance of your affection! --- O, why have I but one heart! ——— Is it poſſible that there is a mind on earth ſo generous, ſo diſintereſted! ———

THESE raptures, tho' without the leaſt connection, better expreſſed the undeſcribable tranſport of my mind, that was overflowing with the warmeſt, the delightfulleſt ſenſations, than the moſt pathetic eloquence. And which my dear benefactreſs returned, with a look, lively and penetrating; attend with an engaging ſmile. My dear Marianne, ſaid ſhe, could you think that that laudable ſincerity, which makes you ſo very charming, could projudice you in the opinion of a mother like me? Come, my dear, calm your tranſports.——Dear Madam, returned I, as ſoon as I was a little more calm, Is it poſſible, without knowing you, to form an idea of ſuch goodneſs, ſuch generous ſen-

timents as yours? If I was not accuſtomed to theſe ſurpriſing marks of your regard for me, I ſhould hardly believe the evidence of my ſenſes. —— Come, come, child, enough, ſaid ſhe, take care of this parchment here; (this was the deed ſhe had been ſpeaking of) thou knoweſt not, that according to the date of this donation, the firſt quarter is due, and that I have brought it with me; here it is, added ſhe, pulling a purſe of Lewis d'ors out of her pocket, which ſhe forced me to take; though I refuſed it, and inſiſted upon her keeping it for me. It will be much ſafer in your hands than in mine, ſaid I, What ſhall I do with it? Do you let me want any thing? Have I not every thing in abundance? I have yet the money by me, which you gave me yourſelf, as well as that I received on the death of the lady, who brought me up. Pray take it however, returned ſhe, it is your own; and 'tis time you ſhould be uſed to have money.

We then heard the parlour door open, on which I put the purſe in my pocket; and immediately after entered the abbeſs of the convent. I heard you were here, Madam, ſaid ſhe, to Mrs. de Valville, with a whining tone; (for I had told her of Mr. de Climal's death) and I am come to have the honour of your company a moment: I intended to have ſent to your houſe this afternoon, as I told Miſs. In fine, they had a ſhort, but very ſerious converſation: which concluded, Mrs. de Valville aroſe: It will be ſome time before I ſee you again, Marianne, ſaid ſhe, farewel. Then ſaluting the abbeſs, ſhe left me, with a mind ſerene and full of the higheſt ſatisfaction. What had I to fear? By what means could my happineſs be wreſted from me? Could there be a greater diſaſter than that I had juſt ſuffered, and from which I had come off victorious? No, certainly; for ſince Mrs. de Valville's kind-

neſs

neſs to me, had been proof againſt the moſt powerful motives that were poſſible to cool her affection, and make her averſe to our marriage; methought I could defy my adverſe ſtars to hurt me. Her goodneſs had exhauſted the ſource of all my troubles; and nothing could diſappoint my joy; but the death of my mamma, her ſon, or myſelf. I ſwam in delight, and ſaid to myſelf, all my diſaſters are finiſhed. Methought, that as my firſt misfortunes were exceſſive, my happineſs began in the ſame manner; I have not loſt, ſaid I, perhaps more happineſs than I now recover: the mother, to whom I owe my life, would not have appeared more tender than that mother, who has adopted me her daughter; nor would have left me a greater name, than that I ſhall now receive.

Mrs. de Valville kept her word, ten or twelve days paſt without ſeeing her; but ſhe ſent almoſt every day to the convent; and I received two or three letters from Valville, who had his mother's conſent to write to me: It would be needleſs to repeat them all to you, beſides ſome of them were ſo long, that you might think them tedious. Here follows only what I can remember of the firſt.

"You have betrayed me, dear Miſs, to my "mother; but I will puniſh you for it; for in- "ſtead of one or two letters, which I might per- "haps have wrote to you, you may expect to re- "ceive a great many; in ſhort as many as I pleaſe. "I deſired you to mention neither the impertinence of Mrs. du Tour, nor the ridiculous behaviour of Mrs. de Fare; but you was reſolved "to take no notice of my intreaties. You have "a little ſtubborn heart, that is reſolved to out-do "me in frankneſs and generoſity; But do you "think you have injured me? Not at all; for "tho' I have not a heart ſo noble as yours; yet,

" my mother is reſolved to appear not leſs diſin-
" tereſted and generous; ſo if I may claim any
" honour from her virtues, things are pretty equal
" between us. But ſtay till we are married; and
" then we ſhall find whether you have a greater
" mind than I; mean time give me leave to boaſt
" that I out-do you in tenderneſs.——— Valville,
" ſaid my mother to me, my daughter's behaviour
" is incomparable; you recommended her to be
" ſecret, which I don't blame you for at all, but
" ſhe has concealed nothing from me; I am
" charmed with her open, and unreſerved confi-
" dence; and love her a thouſand times, if poſſible,
" better than ever I did; confeſs my ſon, ſhe
" quite out-does you. ———

THE reſt of the letter was filled up with tender endearments; but this is all I remember of it. But to proceed. Ten or twelve days had paſſed ſince I heard from Mrs. de Valville; when about ten in the morning, I was told, that a relation of my mamma's inquired for me, and was waiting in the parlour. As they had not told me whether ſhe was old or young, I imagined it was Miſs de Fare; who, excepting her mother, was the only relation of Mrs. de Valville's that I knew; and I went down fully perſuaded it could be none but her. But I was quite miſtaken: inſtead of her, I ſaw a tall, meagre, ſpare woman, her aſpect was long, and diſagreeable, which rendered her mien cold, and forbidding; her arms were long and flat, to which hung two lean and ſhrevelled hands, with fingers of an extraordinary length. I ſtarted at the ſight of this apparition, imagined they had been miſtaken, and thought it was another Marianne ſhe wanted (for it was by the name of Marianne only, that ſhe enquired for me.) Madam, ſaid I, I don't remember that I ever had the honour to know you;

and

and it is probable it is not me, that you asked for. You muſt excuſe me, replied ſhe; but to be more certain, I tell you, that the Marianne I want is a young orphan girl; who, they ſay, knows neither her relations, nor her family: ſhe was ſome days apprentice to a linen-draper, called Mrs. du Tour, and a few days ago was carried by Mrs. de Fare to her country houſe; ſhe is Mrs. de Valville's penſioner: are not you ſhe? —— Yes, Madam, returned I, whatever is your intention in asking for me, I readily acknowledge that I am the perſon you deſcribe, and have too much honour and ſincerity ever to deny it. —— Well ſaid, replied ſhe; you are very pretty; but let me tell you, you carry your ambition a little too high. Farewel, my girl, this is all I wanted to know; and then without any further compliment ſhe opened the parlour-door to go out.

ASTONISHED at this ſingular behaviour, I ſtood at firſt immoveable; and then recollecting myſelf, I called her back: Madam, cried I, what do you mean by this viſit? Are you a relation of Mrs. de Valville, as you ſaid? Yes, my jewel, ſaid ſhe, a near relation, and one that has a little more ſenſe than ſhe. I don't know your deſigns, Madam, replied I; but it would be very ungenerous to come here to ſurpriſe and circumvent me. To this ſhe made no anſwer, but went down.

WHAT can this mean, cried I, to myſelf? what can be the intention of a viſit ſo extraordinary? Is there ſome new ſtorm gathering over me? Well, I can't help it: there is ſomething ſo myſterious in this that I can't penetrate it. On this I returned to my chamber, in order to inform Mrs. de Valville of this new and unexpected accident: not that I thought there could be any crime in concealing it from her; for of what ill conſe-

quence could it be? I ſaw none; but however indifferent it appeared to me, I ſhould have reproached myſelf, if I had not made her my confidante. In ſhort, I wrote to my benefactreſs immediately, and acquainted her with every particular; and the ſame day received an anſwer: —— By the deſcription of the lady you mentioned, returned ſhe in a ſhort letter, I gueſs who you mean, and to-morrow in the afternoon I will call to ſee you and tell you who it is: make yourſelf eaſy —— and indeed I was ſo; but this tranquility was ſoon interrupted, and the calm and placid diſpoſition of my mind changed into the moſt piercing grief, and tormenting anxiety.

BETWEEN ten and eleven the next morning, a lay-ſiſter entered my room; ſhe was ſent by the abbeſs to tell me that one of Mrs. de Valville's maids was come to take me away in a coach, and that I muſt make haſte to dreſs me. As nothing could be more poſitive, I inſtantly obeyed, and in a ſhort time was ready and went down ſtairs.

THE maid above-mentioned was walking in the court, and appeared at the door as ſoon as it was opened to me. She was a woman of an agreeable appearance, pretty well dreſſed, with a behaviour ſuitable to her condition, and extremely ceremonious. I did not think I had the leaſt reaſon to diſtruſt her being Mrs. de Valville's maid, I ſaw the coach ſhe came in, which I thought was my mamma's, it was indeed a little different from that I had always ſeen; but it was very natural to imagine ſhe had more than one. Madam, ſaid the maid after a dozen courteſies, I am come to fetch you, for Mrs. de Valville waits for you. Is ſhe going to dine abroad? ſaid I, and has a mind to take me with her? It is very early. No, Madam, it is not to go any where I believe; I---I---I fancy, Ma-

dam,

dam, it is only to ſpend the day with you, Madam, replied ſhe, after heſitating a little, like a perſon that knew not what to anſwer; but the embarraſſment was ſo ſhort that I did not take much notice of it till it was too late. Come, miſtreſs, ſaid I, let us go; and ſtept directly into the coach. I then obſerved the coachman was a ſtranger to me, and that there was no footman.

THE maid firſt placed herſelf oppoſite to me, but we were ſcarcely out of the court before ſhe ſaid I can't ride eaſy this way; you will give me leave to ſit with you; I did not anſwer a word, though I thought her behaviour was inſtantly become very familiar. Why thought I, does this woman take this liberty with me, who appear to be ſo much above her, and whom ſhe ought to regard as her miſtreſs's friend? I am perſuaded that this would not be agreeable to Mrs. de Valville. After this reflection there aroſe in my mind another, I obſerved the coach-man had not the ſame livery as my mother's; then entered into my mind the ſurprizing viſit that had been made me by the relation of Mrs. de Valville. Theſe conſiderations were attended with ſome inquietude. What coachman is this, ſaid I? I never ſaw him at your miſtreſs's: it is not hers returned ſhe, he belongs to a lady who is come to ſee her, that lent her coach to fetch you from the convent. All this while we were driving on at a great rate, but I obſerved, I did not ſee the ſtreet in which Mrs. de Valville lived, which I knew very well. My inquietude augmented extremely, and my heart began to be in a painful palpitation; but yet I concealed my trouble, and accuſed my ſelf of a ridiculous diſtruſt. Shall we be ſoon there? ſaid I: what way is the coachman carrying us? the ſhorteſt way, madam, ſaid ſhe, we ſhall be at

home in a minute. I looked every way, but in vain, I could ſee nothing of the ſtreet in which my dear benefactreſs lived; and while I was in this conſternation the coach ſuddenly entered a large gate which belonged to a convent. Oh cried I, terribly alarmed, where have you brought me; Mrs. de Valville don't live here! you have deceived me——and immediately I heard the gate ſhut upon me, and the coach ſtopped in the middle of the court. My conductreſs ſaid not a word, I changed colour, and doubted no longer but I had been deceived and impoſed upon. You wretch! cried I, to the woman, where am I? what is your deſign? No noiſe, returned ſhe; you won't be hurt; I ſhall leave you in a good place you ſee. You are here by virtue of a ſuperior authority; and might have been brought away in a manner that would have made more noiſe, but it was thought proper to do it more privately, and I was ſent to deceive you as I have done.

While ſhe ſpoke thus they opened the door of the cloiſters, and I ſaw two or three nuns, who with a ſmiling and friendly air waited for my coming out of the coach to conduct me into the convent. Come, my dear, come, cried they, don't diſturb yourſelf; you won't be ſorry for being amongſt us. One of the lay-ſiſters came to the coach where, my head hanging down, I was ſhedding a torrent of tears: Come Miſs, won't you ſtep down, ſaid ſhe, preſenting me her hand; pray help the lady, added ſhe to the woman that brought me thither; on which I got down; my grief almoſt deprived me of life; they were obliged to ſupport me, and immediately delivered me into the hands of the nuns, pale, ſtunned and weak, who conducted me to a neat room, where they placed me in an eaſy chair that

ſtood

ſtood by the table. There I remained ſilent, bathed in tears, and in a ſtate of weakneſs and inactivity nearly reſembling a ſwoon; my eyes were cloſed, and thoſe young ladies ſpoke to me, exhorted me to take courage, and not to abandon my ſelf to a fruitleſs grief; to which I was unable to make any anſwer, but that of ſighs and groans.

At laſt I lifted up my head, and caſt upon them an eager and diſtracted look. When one of the nuns taking hold of my hand and preſſing it between hers, Come, Miſs, endeavour to recover your ſelf, ſaid ſhe, don't ſuffer your ſelf to be alarmed with imaginary evils; is it ſo great a misfortune to be brought hither, where every thing will conſpire to make you eaſy and happy? We don't know the ſubject of your afflictions; but whatever it is, it can give no ſufficient cauſe for you thus to depreſs your mind, and ſink under ſuch immoderate, ſuch extravagant ſorrow? You are not brought here to be deprived of life; but to live in a houſe, where you will find more ſweet repoſe and conſolation than you can imagine; and where every thing will conſpire to make life deſirable; you will perhaps thank the ſupreme diſpoſer of all things, for what now appears ſo dreadful, ſo inſupportable to you. Come, endeavour to be patient, to be eaſy and calm; are you not a chriſtian, why then, my dear daughter, do you carry your grief to deſpair? O heavens! can any thing happen to us here below, that will excuſe our offending our creator, and make us without guilt cenſure his ſuperintending care! why ſo many groans, ſo many tears? You may be ſure no body has any intention againſt you, that you ought to be afraid of. We were told a thouſand advantageous things of you before we

ſaw

ſaw you: you were repreſented to be a lady of the beſt ſenſe; let your conduct now ſhew that what they ſaid of you was true. Your countenance ſhews that you have a mild and gentle diſpoſition; and I aſſure you we are ſo prepoſſeſſed in your favour, that there is not one of us but loves you already: we all remarked to each other, that the ſight of you inſpired us with friendſhip: and if the lady abbeſs had not been indiſpoſed and in bed, ſhe herſelf would have received you; for ſhe is in the utmoſt impatience to ſee you. Don't then diſappoint the good opinion that you have taught us to form of you. We are entirely innocent of your affliction; we only were deſired to receive you; and we do it with hearts ſenſible of your charms, and full of a tender concern for your uneaſineſs.

MADAM, returned I with a ſigh, I don't accuſe you with any thing; I return you and theſe ladies a thouſand thanks for the obliging thoughts you entertain of me. Theſe few words were pronounced in a plaintive and tender air. In our grief the moving accents that flow from us, are peculiarly affecting, and their force almoſt irreſiſtable. The nuns intereſted themſelves in my concern, and all of them wept.

THEY then propoſed my going to dinner, and inſiſted upon my eating ſomething. I excuſed myſelf: it is unneceſſary, ſaid I, I thank you; but I can't eat. However, it was preſently determined that I ſhould at leaſt taſte a little ſoup, which was brought me, with a handſome deſart of fruit. I at firſt refuſed to touch it; but the nuns were ſo preſſing, and their entreaties and behaviour ſo very obliging, that I could not at laſt avoid eating a little ſoup, and taſting the reſt of the proviſions,

viſions, though I complied with ſome reluctance, and after a great many refuſals.

At laſt they left me; and I grew a little more calm, though I ſaw no reaſon for conſolation. The ſource of our tears is not inexhauſtible. I had received a little nouriſhment; was affectionately careſſed; and the dreadful conſternation and deſpair, to which I had juſt abandoned myſelf, inſenſibly abated, and my grief gave place to a melancholy ſadneſs; my tears were ſtopped, and I fell into a deep and painful muſing. From whence comes this ſudden and unexpected misfortune, ſaid I to myſelf? what will my dear benefactreſs think of it? What will ſhe do to find me again? is not that ill looking relation that came to ſee me in the convent the cauſe of every thing? but what methods have they taken to ruin me? What can be their deſign? Will my dear mamma ſuccour me? and ſuppoſing this, yet how will ſhe be able to diſcover where I am? Will not Valville, my dear Valville, be prevailed to loſe me for ever? Will not they bring him over to their party, and draw him in to conſent to abandon me? Has not Mrs. de Valville conſented to it? or will ſhe not yield to the force of their reaſons, and be prevailed upon to deſert me; and withdraw her generous protection? They will never ſee me more.—— Perſons of the greateſt authority intermeddle with my affairs.——My hiſtory will become public. Oh! there will be no more a Valville for me! perhaps no more a mother!

Thus did I entertain myſelf with my own melancholy ideas. The bell had called all the nuns who received me to the choir, and only one of the lay-ſiſters ſtayed to keep me company, and was ſaying her chaplet, while I was making theſe painful reflections, which I ſometimes ſoftened with more

ſweet

ſweet and comfortable thoughts. Can my mamma, ſaid I, who loves me ſo affectionately, whoſe heart is ſo tender and generous, who has hitherto been ſo immoveable, and has given me ſo many inſtances of her firmneſs and intrepidity; is it poſſible that ſhe can ever change? What did ſhe not ſay to encourage me the laſt time ſhe ſaw me? I muſt finiſh my days with you——I can't live without you, child.—— And then Valville has a mind ſo ſincere, ſo noble, ſo tender.——Alas! to what diſtreſs am I expoſed! what will this end in?

THESE ideas paſſed ſucceſſively in my mind, and were accompanied with the moſt deep and bitter ſighs; while the lay-ſiſter went on with her chaplet, ſometimes ſhrugging up her ſhoulders, with an air expreſſive of pity and compaſſion; and ſometimes interrupting her prayers to put up an ejaculation for me, Lord help us! cried ſhe, God give you the comfort you want. Do thou, bleſſed God, diſſipate her anxiety, and diſpel every care from her mind!

THE nuns returned: Well, how do you do, my dear, ſaid one of them, addreſſing herſelf to me? are you more compoſed and eaſy? Come, you have not ſeen our garden, which is a very fine one; the abbeſs deſired us to ſhew it you; will you take a turn, Miſs? walking will divert and recreate your mind: we have the fineſt walks that can be imagined: then we will go and ſee the abbeſs, who is juſt up. As you pleaſe, ladies, returned I, and then followed them. We walked about three quarters of an hour, after which we went to the abbeſs's apartment; but thoſe nuns ſtayed hardly a minute with me; they ſlipped out one after another till there were none left but the abbeſs and I.

THIS

THIS lady was of a great family, and ſeemed to have been a very agreeable woman. I never ſaw ſo much ſerenity and chearfulneſs, mixed with an air of gravity and ſolemnity: and though ſhe was in years, one did not readily obſerve it; for her countenance was one of thoſe that appear rather ancient than old; one would think that time ſpares them; that their years don't lie heavy upon them, but ſlide away, and leave none but ſoft and ſlight wrinkles on their brows. She had an air of dignity, and a kind of monaſtic reſerve; was tall and remarkably neat. And to form a juſt idea of her, you muſt imagine a perſon that appears with ſuch a ſingular plainneſs and ſimplicity, as ſeems expreſſive of the diſpoſition of her heart, and is a kind of image of its purity, peace, ſatisfaction, and the ſagacity of her thoughts.

As ſoon as I was alone with this lady, ſhe deſired me to ſit down, and I took a chair; they were much in the right, added ſhe ſmiling, who told me, that at firſt ſight you prejudice every body in your favour; and there is the greateſt reaſon to believe, that with ſo much ſweetneſs you have a mind perfectly reaſonable and conſiderate. All my nuns are charmed with you. Pray how do you like being here?——I ſhould like it very well, madam, replied I, had I been brought here without compulſion, and by my own choice; but I can't help being aſtoniſhed at ſuch ſurpriſing and unexpected proceedings, nor avoid being very uneaſy to know the reaſon of it. But don't you gueſs the reaſon returned ſhe? don't you ſuſpect the cauſe? No, madam, cried I, I have never injured any body. Well, I will then inform you why it was done, replied ſhe; or at leaſt what they told me was the cauſe, and what I am charged to let you know.

know. There is a certain gentleman of diſtinction, who is deſirous of marrying you; all his relations are alarmed at it; and in order to prevent it, they have thought proper to remove you from his ſight: not becauſe you want virtue and prudence; for in this they do you juſtice, and it is not on this account they oppoſe you; the only thing alledged againſt you, is your unknown extraction; every diſmal particular whereof is but too well known to you. Conſider, dear daughter, that he has a ſet of powerful relations, who will never ſuffer a marriage like this. Was merit a ſufficient qualification, you would have reaſon to hope that you would be more agreeable to them than any other; but the world is not contented with that; however worthy you are of a general eſteem, it would not prevent their being leſs aſhamed at ſeeing you enter into their alliance: your good qualities would not render your huſband at all more excuſable; they would never forgive his taking a wife like you; and he would be in the eſteem of the public intirely ruined. I muſt confeſs that it is a ſad thing that the world ſhould think thus; but, if we conſider, we ſhall find they are not ſo much to blame as we may at firſt imagine. The difference of conditions is a moſt neceſſary thing in life, and abſolutely requiſite to keep up that harmonious irregularity, which ſprings from the various dependencies of mankind upon each other; and it could no longer ſubſiſt, all order would ceaſe, if ſuch unequal, (and without exaggeration I may ſay) ſuch monſtrous marriages as yours, child, were tollerated. For between you and I, let me remind you, in order to help you to hear reaſon, that you ought to reflect a little on the ſituation in which providence has permitted you to be placed, and how very contemptible are your circumſtances; and

at

at the ſame time conſider who it is that propoſes to marry you; and then pray put your ſelf in their place. Theſe reflections are all I deſire of you.

Ah! Madam, I beg you would ſpare me here, returned I, in that free and reſolute tone, we ſometimes uſe when under the moſt violent grief; I aſſure you it is a ſubject on which I have no more reflections to make; no new humiliations to undergo. I know too well what I am; I have made no ſecret of my misfortunes; I have mentioned them to every one that has known me. I told my hiſtory to Mr. de Valville, who is the gentleman you ſpeak of; I told it to my dear benefactreſs, his mother; I have repreſented to her the various miſeries of my life, in the ſtrongeſt and moſt lively colours; and in a way the moſt proper to diſcourage her: I have drawn before her the moſt dreadful picture of my circumſtances; and have not, Madam, left the leaſt particular of it unmentioned. The diſaſter that happened to me from my very cradle, which was the fatal cauſe of my being now deſtitute of every relation, and unknown to my family; the compaſſion with which I inſpired the hearts of ſome ſtrangers, on a road where both my father and mother lay murdered before them; the charity and compaſſion that excited them to take me with them; the education that was given me by two pious perſons, and the indigence and diſtreſs to which I was reduced at their death; the ſuccour, or if you will, the *alms* I received from a gentleman, who is dead too; for it is thus I have repreſented it the better to deſcribe my indigence, and make Mr. de Valville aſhamed of his paſſion. What could they have deſired more? I have not ſpared my ſelf: I have perhaps, ſaid more than was ſtrictly true, for fear they ſhould think too favourable

rably of me. There is not, perhaps a perſon upon earth who would have had the cruelty to treat me ſo ill as I have done my ſelf; and after all I have ſo frankly acknowledged, it is not for me to ſearch into the reaſons why Mrs. de Valville and her ſon did not abandon me; it is ſufficient to ſay, that ſo far from deceiving them, I have endeavoured to ſet my ſelf in a light more mean and diſtreſſed than can be imagined; conſequently nothing can be objected to me on that point, ſince I never could be degraded lower; and repetitions of the ſame things, could only ſerve to make a girl ſo unhappy, ſo afflicted, and ſo much to be pitied, ſink under the exceſs of her grief. You, Madam, who are an abbeſs, and therefore make the ſtricteſt profeſſion of religion, can only look upon me with humanity and compaſſion; and ſurely ſhould refuſe to join in the perſecution I undergo from perſons that impute to me as a crime, a love of which it is not my fault if I have not cured Mr. de Valville. If men are puffed up with pride, it is not for a lady of your charitable and pious diſpoſition, to ſooth and flatter their vanity; and if I have great merit, as you are pleaſed to ſay (which I am neither bold nor conceited enough to believe) you muſt think I want no accompliſhment. Mr. de Valville, who is a gentleman that knows the world, deſires no more. His mother, a lady univerſally beloved and eſteemed, who has a rank to keep up, as well as thoſe who would injure me, and who is no more fond of diſgrace than they, is not aſhamed to love me; nor leſs difficult to be pleaſed than her ſon: the mother and the ſon think both alike; ought I then to oppoſe them; ought I to refuſe what they offer me; eſpecially when I have given them my heart; and when it is neither their wealth, nor their ſuperior ſtations, but only their tenderneſs

I value; which is infinitely dearer to me than every thing elſe. Beſides, are they not their own maſters? don't they know what they do? am not I ſenſible that they do me too much honour? I can be taught nothing on that point, Madam; therefore let us mention it no more. Be only ſo kind as to tell me now, who are the perſons that brought me hither; what they mean by this extraordinary ſtep, and what pretence they have for treating me to-day with ſo much violence?

My dear child, returned the abbeſs, with a look of friendſhip and concern; was I in Mrs. de Valville's place, I believe I ſhould think as ſhe does. I even approve of your reaſons; but don't mention that I ſay ſo. Upon this I took her hand and kiſſed it. She ſeemed methought to be pleaſed and touched with this ſudden emotion, and after a moment's pauſe, reſumed; I have been very far from having any intention to increaſe your uneaſineſs. I have only ſpoken thus becauſe I was deſired to do it before you came hither. I did not imagine you to be what you are; you are far ſuperior to the ideas I before had formed of you: I expected to find you had beauty, and perhaps ſome wit; but I did not think of finding either the ſolidity of judgment, the charms, and much leſs the character, which I begin to conceive an opinion of. You are worthy of Mrs. de Valville's tenderneſs, and her complaiſance for the ſentiments of her ſon is indeed truly noble. I don't know that lady, but her conduct towards you gives me a high opinion of her; for ſhe can't but be a lady of the greateſt merit. I beg you would not mention what I tell you. I muſt repeat this requeſt, added ſhe, ſeeing me weep out of gratitude; but let me proceed to the reſt. You are brought here by virtue of a ſuperior authority, and what I am charged to propoſe

to

to you, is, to determine either to ſtay in our houſe, that is, to take the veil; or, to conſent to another marriage. I confeſs that I ſincerely wiſh the firſt may be agreeable to you: I wiſh it as much for your ſake, as my own; for mine, becauſe the receiving a perſon like you would give me a great deal of pleaſure; for yours, becauſe you are lovely, and in this world ſuch beauty as yours always expoſes a perſon, tho' perfectly virtuous, in proportion as it is dangerous to the repoſe of others. But here you would dwell in perfect ſecurity, happy yourſelf, and without any danger of interrupting the felicity of any man. What greater advantage can you ever derive from your charms, than to conſecrate them to him that gave them you; from whom you will never meet with that infidelity and contempt which you have reaſon to fear from men, and even from your huſband himſelf? Beauty is often the cauſe of the cruelleſt misfortunes, the greateſt calamities that attend human nature, and even the deſtruction of ſoul and body. You think, perhaps, I talk like a nun, and that I am going to preach to you; far from it, what I ſay, is only the voice of reaſon; the language of truth; and which the daily experience of mankind in all ages will juſtify. But this I only ſay out of my zeal for your happineſs. Theſe are the two things I have promiſed to propoſe to you, and to-night they will come to know your anſwer. Conſult with yourſelf, my dear child, think what anſwer I muſt make for you; for they deſire you would explain yourſelf on each of theſe points, on pain of being removed to-morrow morning far from Paris. Tell me then, will you be a nun, or had you rather be married?

ALAS! mother, I can conſent to neither, replied I; I am not in a ſtate in which it can be my

my duty to conſecrate my ſelf to the ſervice of heaven, in the manner they propoſe; nor can you yourſelf adviſe me to offer a heart full of tenderneſs, full of the ſofteſt paſſions for a human object, to the perpetual contemplation of the deity alone; it now entertains no views, but ſuch as are innocent and lawful; but they would ceaſe to be ſo as ſoon as I had taken the veil. Heaven preſerve me from entering into ſuch engagements as will be impoſſible for me ever to fulfil. As I am not happy enough to be able to give my conſent to it with a pure conſcience; ſo I am not deſperate enough to think without horror of deliberately offending my almighty friend, by ſuch an audacious piece of mockery, ſuch an abominable mixture of impiety and preſumption. As for the marriage they propoſe, the ſame reaſons I am perſuaded will hold good, and ever influence me ſo far as not to permit me to conſent to it: however, let them give me time to conſider of it.——They will give you none, interrupted the abbeſs; this is an affair that they are reſolved to conclude with the utmoſt haſte. You muſt either conſent to be married in a few days, or ſubmit to leave Paris, and be carried I don't know whither. And I would adviſe you, to promiſe to marry the man they propoſe to you, on condition they will permit you to ſee him firſt, that you may have an opportunity of being ſatisfied how you like him; and of being informed what it is natural you ſhould deſire to know of his extraction, circumſtances and character; and that you be granted the privilege of ſpeaking with thoſe who would perſuade you to accept of him for your huſband. Theſe are things which I think they can't refuſe you, however deſirous they are of diſpatching the affair: by this means you will gain time, and who knows what may happen during that interval?

interval? You are in the right, Madam, I returned, with a deep ſigh; but, alas! this is a very ſmall reſource; however, I conſent, provided they grant what you have juſt mentioned: perhaps ſome favourable event may unravel their deſign, and deliver me from the perſecutions I ſuffer.

HERE a nun entered and told the abbeſs that ſhe was expected in the parlour: May be it is on your account, daughter, ſaid ſhe; I ſuſpect it is your anſwer they are come for; but let it be what it will, I ſhall ſoon return: pray, my dear, believe I am very much your friend, and I hope you don't doubt it. On this ſhe left me, and I returned into the room where I had dined, which I entered with my heart dejected, and oppreſſed with grief: no body I am ſure could have known me again; my mind was diſordered, and I was almoſt ready to ſink under the diſcouraging proſpect that lay before me. I was very near an hour in this ſtate of mind when I heard my door open; they came in, I looked to ſee who it was, or rather ſtared; and ſtupid with pondering on my miſery, I remained ſilent: they ſpoke: but I heard them not: What!———what would you have? was all they could draw from me; at laſt they repeated ſo often that the abbeſs wanted me, that I aroſe up and went to her.

I WAS not deceived, ſaid ſhe, as ſoon as ſhe ſaw me at a diſtance coming towards her; it was on your account I was called, and I have an extreme good opinion of your affairs, and don't doubt but they will conclude very happily. I ſaid you had accepted of the marriage, and to morrow about noon they will ſend a coach to carry you to a houſe where you will ſee your intended husband, and the perſons who propoſe him to you. I have

uſed

uſed my utmoſt endeavours to procure you the reception you deſerve, and that regard which I hope they will have for you. Put your truſt, my dear, in that being whoſe providence is able to over-rule all events, and make the moſt cloudy, the moſt gloomy ſcene brighten up, and give place to a pleaſing return of peace and joy; bleſſings to which theſe misfortunes will add a double reliſh! Have recourſe to him and he will not abandon you. I ſhould freely have offered to inform Mrs. de Valville that you are here; but how agreeable ſoever it would be to me to oblige you, it is a ſervice I am not permitted to render you; they have made me promiſe not to intermeddle with your affairs; I have given them my word that I won't, and I am very ſorry for it.

A NUN, who then entered, interrupted our diſcourſe. I went into the garden, ſomething leſs dejected than when I came: I diſtinguiſhed my ideas a little more clearly: I laid down ſome rules for my conduct in the houſe to which I was to be carried the next day: I meditated upon what I ſhould ſay, and I found my reaſons ſo irreſiſtable, that I thought it impoſſible but they muſt acknowledge their force, if they would but condeſcend to hear me. 'Tis true, the little ſchemes we draw beforehand in ſuch caſes are often uſeleſs, ſince it is the various and almoſt infinite turns which are given to things that ought to direct what ſhould be our words, and what our actions: but theſe ſort of preparations are not altogether unuſeful: they amuſe and comfort us; we delude the time that would otherwiſe be ſpent in anxious inquietude, by flattering our ſelves with the thoughts of gaining our cauſe while we are pleading it; and this is very natural to us. A variety of other thoughts crouded into my mind. There is ſome

diſtance, ſaid I to my ſelf, from this convent to the houſe whither they are to carry me. O heaven! if thou wouldſt but permit Valville, or his mother, to meet the coach I ſhall be in, they would not fail to make the coach-man ſtop; and if thoſe who conduct me will not ſuffer them to do it, I will cry out and ſtruggle, and make ſuch a noiſe that my mother, or my lover, may eaſily follow me and know whither I am carried. What wild thoughts enter our minds on ſuch occaſions! there is no chimera, however agreeable or dreadful, which will not readily find a place in our imaginations — But ſuppoſing I ſhould meet my mother or her ſon, thought I again, am I ſure they would not ſhut their eyes, and ſeem not to know me? have not they conſented to my being carried away? may not their relations by their remonſtrances, entreaties, and reproaches have prevailed upon them to retract their word? the maxims and cuſtoms of the world are much againſt me; great ſentiments are difficult to ſupport, and the pride of mankind loads me with contempt, and is offended at my miſery. On this I renewed my tears, and a moment after flattered my ſelf again: but I had like to have forgot one article, which was, that at night when I entered my chamber, having taken a turn in the garden, I ſaw my box in a chair (for I had yet no other furniture) which they had brought from the other convent. You can't eaſily conceive with what new trouble this unexpected object ſtruck me; I don't think my being carried away gave me ſo great a conſternation, or ſo perfectly ſhocked me. Well, cried I, are they then ſo much in earneſt? I had not yet reflected that I wanted my cloaths, and had I thought of it, I ſhould have gone through any extremity rather than have aſked for them. However I no ſooner

ſaw

ſaw them but I imagined that there was no remedy for my misfortunes. What! even my cloaths are brought here; there is then, I cried, no reſource! You would have thought, had you ſeen me, that every thing elſe was nothing in compariſon of this: the frightful box cleared up every thing, ſunk my courage, and made me loſe all my hopes. Now, ſaid I, every thing is determined: every body is united againſt me: this is bidding me an eternal adieu; and it is certain that my dear benefactreſs and her ſon have joined the party.

PRAY, Madam, don't enquire why I formed this raſh and poſitive conſequence, ſince twenty pages would hardly be ſufficient to explain it to you; it was not my reaſon but only my grief that drew theſe concluſions. In ſuch a ſituation of mind as I was then in, things of the ſmalleſt importance, at the firſt ſight, appear dreadful, and fill the heart with uneaſineſs; and a ſoul previouſly diſpoſed to fear, always conſiders them in that light. They had ſent me my clothes, and would therefore break of all correſpondence with me, and never ſee me more. How very natural was this concluſion for one in my unhappy circumſtances, oppreſſed with the keeneſt grief, and ready to catch at any thing that would plunge me deeper in deſpair: but had I been capable of reaſoning cooly, I ſhould at once have perceived that it was a thing of no conſequence. As I was removed from one houſe to another, my clothes to be ſure ought to follow me; and thus I ſhould have reaſoned, had I been capable of reaſoning at all.

HOWEVER I paſſed a very uneaſy night, and my heart beat with the moſt violent palpitation all the next morning. The coach, which the abbeſs had mentioned, was in the court exactly at the

time propoſed. I was told it waited for me; I went down trembling, and the firſt object that preſented, on opening the door, was the woman who had ſeduced me from my own convent, and brought me to this. I ſaluted her with an air of indifference, and ſtepped into the coach; Good morrow, Miſs Marianne, ſaid ſhe, you don't much care for ſeeing me; I aſſure you I an't at all in fault, ſo I am not to be blamed. However I don't think you have any reaſon to be diſpleaſed at all this. I wiſh I was in your place; indeed I am neither ſo young nor ſo handſome as you, and that is all the difference between us.——Do you know any thing of my affairs, returned I? Ay, a little, ſaid ſhe; I have heard a word drop here and there: they ſay you have a mind to marry a man of a great family, and a ſwinging fortune, is it not true? 'Tis ſomething like it ſaid I; Well, continued ſhe, unleſs you have taken a fancy to the young gentleman, I don't think you have any great reaſon to complain. They ſay you have neither father nor mother, and that no body knows who you are, nor where you come from; and between you and I, what can any body come to in ſuch circumſtances? I think one could only expect to be a beggar about the ſtreets: a great many in your caſe are ſo; however you are neither better nor *worſer* for that. 'Tis true they take from you a ſweetheart that is too great a gentleman ever to be your husband; but to make you amends they give you another, a clever young fellow on my word, and ſuch a one as any good tradeſman's daughter might jump at. I am ſure I ſhall never meet with ſuch a one, though I have got a father and mother, and an uncle and aunt, and cozens, and all the relations in the *'verſal* world: you are vaſtly lucky, and for certain muſt have been wrapped up in your mother's

mother's ſmock: I'd have you to think I don't ſpeak more than I know, for I have ſeen your huſband that is to be, and a proper handſome young man he is: I believe he is about ſeven or eight and twenty years old: I don't know how rich he is, but he has great folks for his friends, and ſuch as that; and if he has nothing now he will certainly come to *preferment*. I don't ſay but he may be happy with you; and be as well for you as if he had made you a ſettlement.— But don't you know, interrupted I, whither you are carrying me, and who I am to ſpeak to?——— Yes, replied ſhe, they are very great folks; you will be in good hands: we are going to Mrs. de****'s; ſhe is a relation of your firſt *lovier*.

You will be ſurprized, Madam, to hear that the lady ſhe mentioned was no leſs a perſon than the prime miniſter's wife; and that I was to appear before him. You will judge by this how powerful were the enemies I had to deal with, and that the leaſt glimpſe of hope diſappeared and left me nothing to enable me to ſupport my misfortunes. I told you I flattered my ſelf with fancying Mrs. de Valville and her ſon might perhaps meet me in the way; but had this improbable circumſtance happened, it could have been of no ſervice to me; for I was no ſooner in the coach but the maid drew the curtains before the glaſſes, a precaution which ſhe had probably received orders to take, ſo that it was impoſſible for me either to ſee or be ſeen. We ſoon arrived and ſtopped at a back-door which opened into a large garden, which we went through, at the end thereof ſhe deſired me to ſit on a bench, in a private alley near the houſe, till ſhe returned, to let me know whether it was time for me to appear. Scarce had I ſat half a quarter of an hour alone, when I ſaw

coming towards me, a woman of about forty five or fifty years old, who ſeemed to belong to the family, and who, addreſſing me with an air of a low ſecond hand politeneſs, ſaid, Don't be impatient, Madam, Mr. de **** is engaged in a private converſation with ſome perſons, and you ſhall be called for as ſoon as he has done. Then from an alley that opened into that where I was ſeated, came a young man of about twenty eight or thirty years old, with a perſon pretty agreeable, and dreſſed in a plain but neat manner, who bowed, and ſeemed going to retire, when the woman called him back: Sir, Sir, ſaid ſhe, I have not time to ſtay with this lady, pray keep her company till ſhe is called: I believe it will be no diſagreeable commiſſion for you. I am very ſenſible of it, returned he, and am very much obliged to you for it; drawing near with an air more courteous than gallant. Now, Madam, I will leave you, ſaid ſhe; this gentleman is, at leaſt, one of your friends, or elſe I would not go; his company, I am ſure, will be more agreeable to you than mine. This ſaid, ſhe left us. What can all this mean? ſaid I to my ſelf. There is ſomething myſterious in this. The young man appeared at firſt pretty much confuſed and out of countenance. He ſat down by me after another bow, which I returned with the utmoſt coldneſs.

It is charming weather, ſaid he; this alley is quite delightful; it is as pleaſant here as in the country. Yes, returned I, and then the converſation dropped; for I was not in a diſpoſition to go on with it. He ſeemed at firſt at a loſs how to reſume it, and the only way he could think of was, to pull out his ſnuff box, and preſent it to me open: Don't you take ſnuff, Miſs? ſaid he: No, Sir, returned I; then followed another ſilence

lence, and he did not know what to ſay. The monoſyllables I made uſe of in my anſwers gave him no aſſiſtance, and did not at all help to keep up the converſation. I coughed: Have you got a cold, Miſs, ſaid he? This weather is very apt to give people colds: yeſterday it was cool; and to-day it is pretty hot; theſe variations of the weather are not at all healthful. Very true, Sir, ſaid I. For my part, returned he, I am not ſubject to theſe colds, let the weather be what it will, my lungs are never affected, nothing hurts me. That's well, replied I. As for you, Miſs, reſumed he, whether you have a cold or no, you look as healthy as poſſible, and are as handſome as any body I ever ſaw. You are very obliging, Sir, returned I. 'Tis very true, indeed, Miſs, replied he, Paris is very large; but there are certainly very few that can boaſt of having a form like yours; nor of being poſſeſſed of ſo many charms. Sir, theſe are compliments, ſaid I, that I don't merit; I make no pretenſions to beauty, and if you pleaſe, you may chuſe ſome other topic. I only mention what I can't help being a witneſs of, replied he, and there is no body, in my place, that would not ſay as much and more too. You ought not to be diſpleaſed at a diſcourſe, which it is impoſſible for you to hinder, any more than you can help giving occaſion for it, unleſs you would hide your ſelf from the world, and that would be a great pity; for it is certain there is not a lady more worthy to be admired. And for my part, I eſteem my ſelf very happy in having ſeen you; and ſhould even be much more ſo, if this favourable opportunity ſhould procure me the felicity of ſeeing you again, and offering you my ſervice.— Me, Sir, cried I, with ſome amazement, who have met you here only by chance, and who

according to all appearance, ſhall never ſee you again! Why will you never ſee me again? returned he; it ſhall be juſt as you will; it entirely depends upon you; if my perſon is not altogether diſagreeable to you, I foreſee this meeting will be followed by many others. You may if you pleaſe render this an eternal acquaintance. There is nothing I wiſh ſo much for; and it is a ſincere inclination I have for you, prompts me to tell you ſo. True, I have not had the happineſs to ſee you till this moment; nor have I till now ſeen ſo much beauty; and ſince we are upon this ſubject, I will take the liberty to aſſure you, that the utmoſt of my wiſhes centre in my deſire of rendering my ſelf agreeable to you, and arriving at the poſſeſſion of ſo many unexpected charms. How! Sir, returned I, not willing to make any reply to ſuch aukward and uncouth declarations of love; did not you expect to meet with ſo many charms? What! did you know you ſhould find me here then? Yes, Madam, replied he, to keep you no longer in ſuſpence; I am the man Mrs. Kitty mentioned in the coach, as ſhe has ſince told me. What, Sir! you, cried I, the husband propoſed for me! Yes, Madam, ſaid he; you ſee I was in the right, when I ſaid our acquaintance would laſt a great while, if it were not your fault. That is the reaſon I walked in the garden, and was left here with you, in order to procure me an opportunity of converſing with you. They told me I ſhould ſee a very amiable young lady; but you far exceed their deſcription; and I find I ſhall be induced to marry out of a moſt tender paſſion, where I only expected to do it out of intereſt and conveniency: Yes, Miſs, indeed I love you: I am charmed with your perfections; and it was this paſſion, that made me appear ſo perplexed at

ſeeing

ſeeing you firſt. Tho' I have been in company with a great many ladies, I never was in love before; but you are more handſome than all the others together. And it is your place now to conſider whether you accept of me or not. As for the reſt, Miſs, you may enquire about my temper and character. I am ſure you will hear a good account of them; for I am neither a gameſter nor a debauchee; I value my ſelf upon being a ſober regular man; and tho' I am a batchelor, my chief view is to get preferment; and I ſhall not be worſe when I am married; for a wife and family make a man a good œconomiſt. As to my preſent circumſtances, they are not indeed very conſiderable. My father was fond of his pleaſures, and lived a little too faſt; and that, you know is not the way to enrich a family. Beſides, I have a brother and ſiſter; I am the eldeſt indeed; but yet there are three portions to be paid inſtead of one; however I ſhall have ſomething in hand on account of our marriage; but this I don't lay any great ſtreſs upon. The chief point, is, that I am now in the poſſeſſion of a very good place, and have the promiſe of a better, which will be given as ſoon as our marriage contract ſhall be ſigned: Not to mention what I have ſaved theſe three years paſt, out of the perquiſites of a ſmall employment; which will be ſoon changed for one much more conſiderable and profitable. So you ſee by means of the great friends I have, we ſhall ſoon be in very eaſy circumſtances. But Mr. de ****, the prime miniſter, will inform you more particularly of this himſelf; for I tell you nothing, my dear, but what is true, added he, taking hold of my hand in order to kiſs it.——— Here, Madam, my pride took the alarm, and my heart could not help ſwelling a little. Softly,

Sir, ſaid I, withdrawing my hand, with a diſguſt that I was unable to diſſemble; pray, don't be ſo forward, I can't admit of any freedoms; we have not yet ſettled matters: Who are you, pray, Sir?———Who am I, Miſs? returned he, vexed and confuſed. I have the honour to be the ſon of the miniſter's lady's nurſe; we ſucked the ſame milk, and ſo ſhe is my foſter-ſiſter: I am no leſs a perſon, I aſſure you: my mother has a penſion from her; my ſiſter is really her head-chamber-maid; ſhe loves us all, and is deſirous of making my fortune. This is the perſon you ſpeak to, Miſs; can there be any thing in this that ſhocks you? Don't the propoſal pleaſe you?———I have no thoughts of marrying yet, Sir, ſaid I.———Perhaps the reaſon is becauſe I am not agreeable to you, he reſumed:———No, Sir, replied I, if I ever marry any one, I muſt at leaſt love him firſt; and I don't find that I love you yet: I don't know what I may do.———So much the worſe; 'tis my misfortune, ſaid he; but I would not have you think it would be any difficulty for me to get a wife: it is not quite eight days ſince I had one recommended to me, who will have a good deal of money, when her aunt dies; and has beſides a father and mother.———And I, Sir, I returned, am an orphan; and you would do me too much honour.———I don't ſay that, Miſs, replied he; nor did I ever think ſo; but, truly I never thought you would have ſhewn ſuch contempt for me. I imagined you would have conſidered a little better on't, on account of your preſent circumſtances, which are dreadful enough, and not very favourable to your being ſettled in the world. Excuſe me for being ſo plain with you: I mention it purely out of friendſhip; you muſt be ſenſible that there are ſome opportunities in life,

life which we ought not to let ſlip; eſpecially when we meet with people not over ſcrupulous in theſe points, and ſo little difficult as I. With reſpect to marriage, there is hardly any body but are deſirous of entering into a family; I am willing to diſpenſe with it, and this I think ought to be conſidered.———Sir, returned I, with a geſture full of indignation; you entertain me with very pretty diſcourſe, nor is your love leſs polite! Pray, leave that ſubject.———Mighty well, Madam! as you pleaſe, returned he riſing: I ſhall be neither better nor worſe; and b gging your pardon, you have no reaſon for being ſo proud. If it be not you, I can't help it; it muſt be another. They thought this was doing you rather a very great favour, than any harm. You have beauty, I don't at all diſpute, and it has happened to hit my fancy; but for all that, I don't know who will be the greateſt loſer: I ſhould have made no difficulty of marrying you, tho' you have nothing; I ſhould have loved and eſteemed you not at all the leſs for it. But ſince it don't pleaſe you, I will take my leave of you, Miſs, and remain your very humble ſervant.———Your ſervant, Sir, ſaid I. Upon this he took two or three ſteps, as if going; and then coming up to me again. But, Miſs, ſaid he, I conſider you are alone, and if my company will be of any ſervice to you, till you are called for; I ſhall do my ſelf the honour to offer it you.——— I give you many thanks, I replied, with the tears in my eyes; not becauſe he was going to leave me; but to ſee my ſelf expoſed to ſuch mortifying adventures.———I hope, Miſs, I am not the cauſe of thoſe tears, added he, I have ſaid nothing that could poſſibly make you uneaſy.———No, no, Sir, I replied, I don't at all complain of you; you need not give yourſelf the trouble to ſtay; for here

comes the perſon that brought me hither. And indeed, I ſaw Mrs. Catharine coming to us.——— I believe he did not care to have her a witneſs of the indifferent reception I gave him; for he immediately retired thro' another alley that he might not meet her.

HEY-DAY! what has Mr. Villot left you? ſaid ſhe, have you diſmiſſed him? No, returned I, we parted becauſe we ſaw you coming, and had nothing further to ſay to each other. Well, Mrs. Marianne, replied ſhe, how do you like him? Is not he a clever genteel ſpark? You find I did not impoſe upon you. You could not expect to have done better, had you never been in ſuch wretched circumſtances; but come let us be going, added ſhe, they wait for us. I then followed her, with a mind extremely diſturbed; and a heart filled with the keeneſt anguiſh: We croſſed ſeveral ſpacious rooms, and came at laſt to a large hall; where a company of footmen were waiting. At the ſame time I obſerved two gentlemen diſcourſing at a window, one of whom, appeared to be of about twenty-four, or twenty five years old, and had a preſence extremely noble; the other was a little older, and had the air of an officer. Stay a moment, ſaid a woman who conducted me, while I go to tell them that you are here. She then went into another room, and returned a minute after. But during this ſhort interval, the young gentlemen had broke off their converſation, and turned to look upon me with an extreme attention, which, notwithſtanding the acuteſt torment of mind, and moſt ſenſible diſtreſs, I could not help taking notice of. When I heard the youngeſt ſay to the other, with a tone of admiration and ſurpriſe, Did you ever ſee any thing ſo lovely! At this I caſt down my eyes and turned away my head. This was a little accidental comfort, which I could

could not help taſting, tho' it did not divert my melancholy; like a ſweet flower, whoſe agreeable odour ſalutes us as we paſs along, which tho' it refreſhes the ſenſes, leaves the mind as it found it. In whatever afflictions we are plunged, our vanity almoſt always performs its office, it hardly ever lies dormant; it is ſo natural to our ſex, and ſo foreign to whatever elſe concerns us, that it remains the ſame, and ſupports itſelf amidſt every affliction.

THE maid returned, and deſired me to walk in, at which the gentlemen followed me. I found there five or ſix ladies, and four gentlemen, two of whom belonged to the law, another to the army, and the fourth, the maid told me, was the prime miniſter himſelf. His age rendered him venerable, he was tall, and well made, had a majeſtic mien, and a countenance that immediately inſpired every one with confidence, calm'd the troubled mind, and was a kind of pledge of the goodneſs that reigned within, and the juſtice that with an impartial hand he always diſtributed. Time had not made him look old, nor given him the infirmities which imbitter the decline of life; it had only ſpread over his looks an inexpreſſible ſomething, that immediately filled the mind with a reſpectful awe. It was a countenance that was ſo agreeable to look upon, that one forgot his age, and was pleaſed to feel the veneration it inſpired. Even his healthful ruddy complection, had ſomething extremely venerable in it, and appeared leſs the effect of temperance, than the fruit of wiſdom, and the happineſs of a ſerene and tranquil mind. The mildneſs of his ſentiments ſhone in his face, and his ſoul painted there its own honeſt plain and amiable portrait. The charms of virtue and integrity have no age; they never decay; but are the moſt ſplendid ornaments of every ſtation. Such was the miniſter be-

fore

ore whom I appeared. He had in his manner of governing, a merit peculiar to himſelf, which had been hitherto unknown.

We have had ſome miniſters whoſe names our hiſtorians have rendered immortal: they were indeed great men; but during their adminiſtration, their firſt care was always to gain the affections of the people; to render them attentive to their actions, and to make themſelves eſteemed as the deepeſt politicians: they were always thought to be ſurrounded with impenetrable myſteries, and were pleaſed to find great things were expected from them; and that in the moſt difficult and intricate affairs, it was thought they would manage with a maſterly hand, even before they had undertaken to do it; this was an opinion which flattered their vanity, an artifice which their great ſucceſſes rendered very excuſable. On the contrary, our miniſter governed according to the maxims of the truly wiſe; his conduct was mild, ſimple, without oſtentation, and with reſpect to himſelf entirely diſintereſted; he thought of being uſeful, never of being loaded with praiſes: he did great actions from the ſingle conſideration of the good of his country, and not from the glory that attended them. Contented and ſatisfied with his own ſkill and abilities, he did not raiſe the expectations of the multitude beforehand, or ſeek their applauſe afterwards by induſtriouſly publiſhing his ſucceſs. He did not diſtinguiſh his moſt noble and praiſeworthy actions from the moſt common and trivial part of his conduct; and whatever labour and toil they coſt him in private, in publick they were much the ſame. A genius, void of all pageantry, ſet bounds to his conduct, while it hid the capacity that managed every thing, that exerted itſelf for the public good, regardleſs of his own; for

when

when that was ſecured, the other he knew muſt be eſtabliſhed on the moſt ſolid baſis, and he ſhare in the general happineſs. The multitude reaped the fruit of his labour with more ſatisfaction than ſurprize, and perſons of reflection alone formed a right judgment of the ſimplicity and plainneſs of his conduct. Thus to ſurmount difficulties almoſt unſurmountable; to remedy inconveniencies almoſt remedileſs; to procure a glory, an advantage, a benefit to his country; to tame an enemy that attacked him, whom his natural mildneſs, the intricacies of the time, or the modeſty of his adminiſtration had emboldened: all theſe things he performed in that diſcreet, ſmooth, plain, and eaſy manner with which he did every thing elſe: his meaſures were ſo ſecret, ſo ſtill and imperceptible, and he was ſo little ambitious of gaining the eſteem he merited, that one might forget to praiſe him, though all his actions were laudable. He was like a father, by whoſe induſtry and care his children are contented, happy, and in good eſteem. He boaſts not to them of the pains they coſt him, becauſe he don't deſire their encomiums; while they on their ſide do not obſerve the trouble he gives himſelf on their account, and make him no other return than that of their ſincere affection. When this is the character of a miniſter, he muſt be looked upon with veneration and the higheſt reſpect; he is no amuſement for perſons of a prying inquiſitive diſpoſition; but only inſpires his fellow-ſubjects with confidence and tranquility. As to foreigners, they looked upon him as a man who loves juſtice, and from whom they could expect to gain nothing by deviating from it. He taught them to regulate their ambition, and to fear nothing from his. Happy is the king who has ſo ſincere a friend, and who knows how to

value

value him as he ought! and happy the people who have ſo noble ſo diſintereſted a patriot!

I BELIEVE, Madam, you can't forbear ſmiling to hear me talk ſo like a politician; but if I have been too large in this part of his character you will excuſe me; ſince I only tell you what every body then ſaid of him. But to return; we are now in his preſence.

AMONG all the perſons that ſurrounded me, ſome ſeemed to look upon me out of curioſity, while others did it with a ſneer and an air of diſdain: theſe laſt I ſoon found were Valville's relations. I forgot to tell you, that the ſon of the lady's nurſe, my deſtined husband, was there, who ſtood by the door with a ſervile and timorous countenance.

I WAS at firſt very much diſconcerted at the ſight of ſo much company, but ſoon recovered myſelf and reſumed my preſence of mind. Amidſt ſuch extreme diſcouragements we are apt to fear nothing; beſides I was conſcious of my own innocence, and that they alone were guilty in unjuſtly perſecuting me: I loved Valville, they wreſted him from me; and methought I had nothing more to fear. The moſt formidable authority loſes all its awe and veneration when it is made to oppreſs the innocent.

THE miniſter looked upon me with a ſmile of affability; ſhe is perfectly amiable, and Valville is very excuſable, ſaid he, addreſſing himſelf to one of the ladies, who was his wife. Yes, ſhe is very pretty; ſhe would do well enough for a miſtreſs, replied another lady in a malicious and ill-natured tone. At this diſcourſe I only gave her a look full of contempt. Come; ſoftly, ſaid the miniſter to her; then addreſſing himſelf to me, Come near, Miſs, added he, they ſay Mr. de Valville

Valville loves you, is it true that he intends to marry you? At leaſt he told me ſo, Sir, ſaid I: At this two or three of the ladies broke into a loud and ſcornful laughter. I again only caſt a cold and careleſs glance at them; while Mr. de **** made a ſign with his hand to engage them to be ſilent. You are an orphan, and know not who you are, reſumed he; That is very true, Sir, returned I. Well, added he, do yourſelf juſtice then, and reſolve to think no more of this marriage: I can never conſent to it; but I will make it up to you, and take you under my care. There is a young man that is a very ſuitable match for you: He is an honeſt lad, and I ſhall take care to promote him: I would have you marry him; I hope you conſent to it. I don't deſign to marry at all, Sir, returned I; and I entreat you would not preſs me any more to it: This, Sir, is my final reſolution. Well, I will give you four and twenty hours to think of it, ſaid he; they ſhall take you back to the convent, and I will ſend away for you to morrow; don't be refractory, for you muſt ſee Mr. de Valville no more; I will take care of that. I ſhall never alter my mind, Sir, ſaid I; I can never think of marrying a man that has reproached me with my misfortunes; ſo you may now reſolve what to do with me, for it will be to no purpoſe to make me come hither again.

SCARCE had I finiſhed theſe laſt words, when word was brought that Valville and his mother were coming, and who immediately entered the room. Judge of their ſurprize and mine. What my daughter! thou here! cried Mrs. de Valville; O mother! cried Valville, with his eyes ſparkling with joy; 'tis ſhe herſelf!

THEIR relations had not the leaſt ſuſpicion of their coming, and therefore had not provided againſt it.

it. The only precaution they had taken, was to finiſh my affair in the morning, a time leaſt ſubject to viſits. Beſides, they had imagined that Mrs. de Valville would be at a loſs to know how to get intelligence of me, and thought ſhe was entirely ignorant of the miniſter's having any ſhare in my adventure. But, Madam, you will eaſily call to mind the viſit I had received two or three days before from a certain, thin, tall, meagre lady: and you know I immediately informed my benefactreſs of this extraordinary viſit; that I had given her a picture of the lady, and that ſhe had writ me word that ſhe knew the perſon it repreſented. And this guided her in ſearch after me.

It was very plain that my hiſtory was divulged; and that that lady had been acquainted with it: ſhe was proud, of a malignant ſpirit, and the ſhort diſcourſe that ſhe had with me at the convent, ſufficiently diſcovered her ill intentions. To all appearance it muſt be ſhe that had exaſperated her relations, and engaged them to remove me, in order to ſecure them from the affront Mrs. de Valville was about to throw upon them, by making me one of the family: and indeed my ſudden diſappearing, could be attributed to nothing elſe but the reſult of a ſcheme they had concerted together againſt me. But had they alone been concerned, it is probable they would have taken another method, and have endeavoured to have prevented my happineſs by the ſtiller methods of artifice and addreſs; and would not have dared to have taken ſuch arbitrary and violent ſteps, unleſs they had been ſupported by authority: thus my benefactreſs reaſoned. As a coach had been ſent for me, ſhe enquired what was the coachman's livery; and what ſort of a woman it was that

pretended

pretended to have been ſent by her to take me away. One of the ſervants of the convent had ſeen both the coachman, and the above-mentioned woman, and had taken ſuch notice of them, as to be able to give a particular deſcription of each. She had no ſooner deſcribed the features of the latter, but my mamma recollected that ſhe had ſeen ſuch a perſon at Mr. de ****'s, and that ſhe belonged to his wife, who was one of their relations. As to the coachman's livery, the nun told them, it was a yellow ſilk lace upon a brown cloth, which they knew belonged to another relation, a magiſtrate, whom they viſited almoſt every day. From this they inferred, that not only the whole family were concerned, but that they were ſupported by the prime miniſter himſelf, ſince Mrs. de **** had ſent one of her maids for me.

Mrs. de Valville came to ſee me the ſame day I was taken away, but tho' ſhe found I was carried off, ſhe could not learn any of the above particulars till the day after; becauſe the ſervant who was the only perſon from whom ſhe could expect to get any intellegence, was abſent, on ſeveral commiſſions for the houſe. My dear mamma, no ſooner heard that I was conveyed away, but ſhe was ſeized with the moſt violent grief; and as the abbeſs told me afterwards, behaved like a tender mother who had loſt an only daughter: ſhe at firſt fainted away, and they no ſooner brought her to herſelf, than ſhe diſſolved in tears, and lamented my loſs in the moſt moving language.

I confess, Madam, I love her, ſaid ſhe to the abbeſs, who repeated it to me again; I am moſt tenderly attached to her, and it muſt have been impoſſible for me to have avoided it; ſhe has a heart, a ſoul, a manner of thinking which would

aſtoniſh

aſtoniſh you; you know my dear child poſſeſſes nothing, and yet you can't imagine how noble, how generous, how diſintereſted I have found her; I eſteem her even more than I love her; I have ſeen ſuch inſtances of the greatneſs of her ſoul, as have moved even the bottom of my heart ——It is me, my perſon ſhe loves, and not the ſuccour I give her——Is not this admirable in a ſituation like hers?——I believe ſhe would die rather than diſpleaſe me——ſhe carries this to a ſcrupulous nicety, and if I ſhould ceaſe to love her, I am perſuaded ſhe would no longer have the courage to receive any thing from me—— What I tell you is ſtrictly true, but alas! I have loſt her! how muſt I find her again? what have my unworthy relations done with her? where have they carried her?——But, Madam, why have they taken her away from you? returned the abbeſs, why ſhould they be concerned at your bounty and love for her? what intereſt can they have in being an obſtacle to it?——Alas! Madam, ſaid ſhe, it is becauſe my ſon is not proud enough to deſpiſe her, it is becauſe he has ſenſe enough to do her juſtice, and a mind capable of knowing her worth; they are afraid he ſhould love her too much, and that I love her enough to conſent that he ſhould indulge his paſſion for her. I have not time to tell you by what accident he came to know her, but ſee the cauſe of the perſecution ſhe ſuffers from them. An unhappy event has let them into the whole ſecret, thro' the indiſcretion of one of my relations, who is one of the ſilleſt women I ever knew, and who never could forbear indulging a wretched itch of talking: It is not indeed without reaſon, they miſtruſt my tenderneſs for her: for there is not a gentleman of good ſenſe, to whom I ſhould not think I had

given

given an invaluable treaſure, had I married him to this dear, this lovely girl.

How extremely kind was this! how frank and unreſerved her expreſſions! She diſcovers all; ſhe now endeavours to conceal nothing; ſhe who had hitherto required from me ſo much circumſpection, ſo much reſerve and prudence, is now ſo overcome by her affection and ſenſibility, that ſhe herſelf forgets to be ſilent, and is the firſt that reveals our ſecret; it burſt from her troubled heart! how amiable that trouble, which all my love for her, great as it has been, was never able ſufficiently to repay! and which I can't now think on, without melting into tears of the moſt affectionate gratitude. Yes, Madam, I am now all in tears, and can ſcarcely proceed: O how vaſt are the obligations I am under to her! but alas! this dear, this admirable woman is no more; and that charming tenderneſs ſubſiſts no where but in my breaſt!

When the abbeſs told me theſe particulars, my dear mamma ſo perfectly took up my thoughts, that I quite loſt ſight of Valville, whom his mother was hardly able to comfort, and who waited in the coach, overwhelmed with grief, while ſhe was examining the ſervant. She had no ſooner had this information, than (tho' extremely indiſpoſed) ſhe haſted with her ſon to Mr. de ****'s fully perſuaded, that there ſhe ſhould hear ſome news of me. The miniſter's wife was not only a relation, but one of her moſt dear, and intimate friends; and therefore ſhe was perſuaded that ſhe could not be brought to aſſiſt in the plot, without a great deal of reluctance, and did not at all doubt but ſhe ſhould bring her over to her party. The ſervants who had no orders to prevent her entring, upon her enquiring for Mrs. de **** immediately told

told her where ſhe was, and both Valville and my mamma, as I have ſaid, entered the room without any interruption.

At the ſight of my mamma, Mr. de **** ſmiled with an air of affability, tho' at the ſame time, I thought he looked a little diſconcerted. As to the relations, they ſaluted her with the utmoſt gravity; caſt upon her a cold and critical look, and then turned away their heads with a viſible diſcontent. Valville ſeemed to devour them with his eyes; but was obliged to be ſilent, for it was only on that condition, that his mother had conſented to take him with her. All the reſt of the company appeared attentive and curious, and indeed the opening ſcene promiſed ſomething very intereſting. Mrs. de **** broke ſilence firſt; Your ſervant, Madam, ſaid ſhe to my mamma, indeed we did not expect to ſee you here, and I am very much afraid you are going to be very angry with me.——Why ſo, Madam, cried immediately the long meager relation, (for I have forgot her name, and have only retained the ſingularity of her figure) why ſhould ſhe be angry with you? added ſhe, with a tone even more ſour and diſagreeable than her looks; can we diſoblige her in doing her ſervice, and preventing her incurring the reproaches of her whole family?——You may think what you pleaſe, Madam, of my actions, return'd my benefactreſs, with an air of indifference, but I ſhall never alter my conduct, upon the judgment you form of it; we are of a character too different to be ever of the ſame opinion; I approve of your ſentiments no more than you do of mine; and as I don't aſk your advice, I don't expect you ſhould give it.

HERE Valville was as red as fire, his eyes ſparkled, and by his quick breathing, I eaſily perceived that his heart fluttered, and that it was with the greateſt difficulty he contained himſelf.

SIR, continued Mrs. de Valville, addreſſing herſelf to the miniſter, it was your lady I intended to wait upon this morning, and here I have found the ſubject of my viſit, added ſhe, turning towards me; I have been informed that one of Mrs. de ****'s women made uſe of my name, to take her from the convent, where I had placed her, and I hope ſhe will tell me her reaſons for it; for I confeſs I don't know what to make of ſuch an extraordinary proceeding. Have you all been willing to divert yourſelves with my uneaſineſs? what can be the intention of thoſe, who have contrived to rob me of this young perſon, in whoſe happineſs I intereſt myſelf? I am ſure Sir, this project is not your lady's: I can't be ſo unjuſt as not to diſtinguiſh her from thoſe, who at leaſt muſt have been at ſome pains, to make her conſent to have any ſhare in it: Nor do I accuſe you, Sir, you were both, I don't doubt, prevailed upon by the miſrepreſentations of others; but what pretence could they make uſe of? upon what foundation could they undertake ſuch a ridiculous enterpriſe? with what crime do they charge this young lady?——Lady! interrupted the ill-natured relation, with a ſatirical air, lady! I think I have heard her called Marianne, or Mrs. *What do you call her*; for as no body knows her origin, we cannot tell who ſhe is, unleſs we could divine. But, perhaps, you have a mind to compliment her a little, becauſe ſhe is tollerably genteel.

VALVILLE at this diſcourſe, could refrain no longer; he looked upon her, with a ſcornful and bitter

bitter ſmile, which went to her heart. My little couſin, ſaid ſhe to him, I know what I ſay is not agreeable to you; but I think you ought to forbear laughing at it. How now? my great couſin, returned he, if I think it pleaſant, why ſhould not I laugh at it. Pray hold your tongue, ſon, ſaid Mrs. de Valville immediately. As to you, Madam, I deſire you would let me ſpeak after my own manner, and as I think proper. If this lady has any thing to do with you, you are at liberty to call her what you pleaſe; for my part, I can't ſcruple to call her miſs or lady, and yet whenever I pleaſe, I ſhall call her Marianne; and this is a liberty I can take, without treſpaſſing upon that regard which I think is her due. The care I take of her, gives me a right which you cannot pretend to; but it will never induce me to treat her with that contemptuous familiarity, which you think yourſelf authorized to do: Every body has a peculiar manner of thinking, and therefore I don't wonder, that our thoughts are ſo oppoſite; I ſhall never be capable of inſulting the diſtreſſed, for no other reaſon but becauſe they are ſo; I readily grant that providence has hid from us, the knowledge of her family; ſhe has reaſon to lament her misfortunes, but not to be humbled for them. The one is not a natural conſequence of the other; reaſon and humanity, (not to mention religion) muſt engage us to treat perſons in her circumſtances, with the utmoſt tenderneſs; it is repugnant to our nature, it is repugnant to the ſoft influences of humanity in our breaſts, to trample upon thoſe whom providence has brought low; an air of diſdain muſt ſit upon us with a very ill grace, while we make our pride cancel all that is humane, all that is noble, from our minds, and baſely take refuge in a more than brutal inſenſibility. Such

misfortunes as her's ought to be regarded by the generous and good as an equivalent for want of pedigree; but, Madam, ſince you know her hiſtory, you muſt have been informed, that there is ſuch probable evidence, as ariſes almoſt to a certainty, that her father and mother who were murder'd, with their attendants, when ſhe was but two years old, were foreigners of the greateſt diſtinction. This was the opinion that was entertained of them at that time. You know they had two footmen and a chambermaid; that Miſs, whoſe little clothes ſhewed ſhe could belong to nobody but a perſon of quality, ſo remarkably reſembled the lady that was aſſaſſinated, from whoſe cold embrace ſhe was taken, that it could not be doubted that ſhe was her daughter. Theſe particulars have been certified by a virtuous perſon, who then took her to her charge; brought her up, and on her death-bed related every circumſtance to a monk, called father St. Vincent, who is ready to repeat the whole.

HERE the diſintereſted part of the company, (I mean thoſe that were not of the family) appeared very much moved; and even ſome of the relations, who were leſs obſtinate than the reſt, ſeemed ſenſibly affected, particularly Mrs. de ****, and a gentle murmur was raiſed, which I perceived was cauſed by their beginning to conceive a more favourable opinion of me.

YOU ſee, Madam, continued my benefactreſs, that all theſe preſumptions are in her favour, and ſufficiently juſtify my giving her the title of miſs or young lady, and prove that I could not have refuſed them her, without uſing her ill; I don't pay her a mere compliment, but a piece of that juſtice ſhe has a claim to; and which nothing but the moſt pitiful and abject pride, can make any

refuſe to a perſon of her character. I am ſorry you force me to ſay before her, that her perſon, which even to you appears agreeable, is indeed her leaſt diſtinguiſhing accompliſhment, and I aſſure you that by her wit, the amiable qualities of her mind, and by the nobleneſs of her proceeding, ſhe has proved herſelf to be as much a lady, as any other perſon of what rank ſo ever. You muſt confeſs that theſe are conſiderations which demand ſome regard. Her education, tho' ſimple, has been virtuous, and has laid a foundation for that greatneſs of ſentiment and inward rectitude, which are the brighteſt ornaments of the moſt ſplendid, the moſt exalted ſtations. And if there be any truth in our opinion, that virtue runs in the blood, the ſublimity of her ideas, and the delicacy of her ſoul, ſet her in a rank vaſtly ſuperior to moſt of our quality.

Oh, doubtleſs! ſaid Valville, who had here room to ſlide in a word; had the world thought proper to beſtow the title of lady upon none but thoſe whoſe real merit gave them a claim to it, how many of our modern quality would dwindle into plain Molly's and Kitty's; but happily they have had neither their fathers nor mothers killed, and we know what they are. The company could not help laughing at this agreeable raillery. When Mrs. de Valville, after deſiring him not to interrupt her, went on.

However, reſumed ſhe, I protect her, I have been of ſome ſervice to her, and deſign to continue to be ſo, while ſhe ſtands in need of my aſſiſtance; and there are no virtuous minds, who would not be ready to envy the delight I take in expreſſing my affection for her, and wiſh themſelves in my place, that they might experience the ſame ſatisfaction. This appears to me a moſt laudable

laudable action, an action that carries its own reward with it, and unleſs it be a crime againſt the ſtate, for the rich to compaſſionate thoſe who are moſt worthy to be reſcued from their misfortunes, I don't know what I can be charged with; and ſince it has not yet been proved to be one, I muſt demand a reaſon, Sir, for the audacious attempt made againſt me, and for the ſcandalous methods they have made uſe of to impoſe upon you and your lady. I am come, Sir, to claim a girl I love, who is exceeding dear to me, and whom you would love as much as I, did you know her as well.

She ſtopped here, all the company held their peace, whilſt I with eyes full of tears, gave her a look which expreſſed all the tender emotions of my ſoul, and which moved every one but that inexorable relation, I have not named, who ſtill ſhewed the ſame unrelenting mien ſhe did at firſt.

When after a moment's pauſe; Love her, Madam, love her, ſaid ſhe, ſhaking her head, who hinders you? but don't forget that you have relations, whoſe honour you ought not to ſully. This is all we deſire of you.

Pshaw, Madam, you don't know what you ſay, cried my mamma pretty warmly; you can't ſurely think that either you, or any one elſe, have a right to make me alter my conduct in this affair; I am neither under your tuition, nor theirs. I freely grant you all the privilege of giving me your advice, but will never ſuffer myſelf to be reprimanded. You, Madam, ſuppoſe them to act and ſpeak; but I am perſuaded none of them would own what you are pleaſed to make them ſay.——You muſt excuſe me, Madam, you muſt excuſe me, cried the harpy, we are not

ignorant of your deſigns, and are juſtly incenſed at them. In ſhort, your ſon loves this little thing too much, and what is worſe, you ſuffer it——— And if indeed I did ſuffer him to love her, returned Mrs. de Valville cooly, who is there that can hinder him? who elſe ſhould call him to account? Nay, I ſhould have a very ill opinion of my ſon's judgment and character, if he had not the higheſt eſteem for this little thing, as you are pleaſed to call her: and who as little as ſhe is, will be thought perhaps ſo, only by thoſe who are ſuperior to her in nothing but pride.

THE miniſter, who had attended to this dialogue, ſmiling all the while with his eyes fixed on the floor, at theſe words interpoſed, in order to prevent any more replies. You are in the right, Madam, ſaid he, to Mrs. de Valville, I can't help approving your kindneſs to this amiable young lady: you are generous; her misfortunes render her worthy your care; her countenance has ſomething expreſſive of thoſe engaging virtues, thoſe noble accompliſhments, ſhe is poſſeſſed of: but it is not the care you take of her, nor the good opinion you have of her that alarm us; the only thing that makes us uneaſy, is, a report that Mr. de Valville has not only the higheſt eſteem for her, which is very reaſonable; but the greateſt tenderneſs, which this young lady's beauty renders highly probable. In ſhort, they talk of a marriage being about to be concluded, which your affection for her, they ſay, makes you ſo far forget yourſelf as to conſent to; and this it is that diſpleaſes your relations.———And thoſe relations have reaſon to be diſpleaſed at it, interrupted the ill-natured kinſwoman.———Pray, Madam, let me ſpeak, ſaid the miniſter, with a calm and ſerious

ſerious tone, this lady deſerves to hear reaſon.

I CONFESS, reſumed he, that from what you have told us, it is very probable that this young beauty is of noble extraction; but the melancholy cataſtrophe you have mentioned has caſt over it a veil of obſcurity, which has ſomething ſhocking in it. If this marriage ſhould ever be conſummated, you would be reproached with her misfortunes, ſince they are ſuch as our cuſtoms will not ſuffer us to over-look. I would pay her the ſame reſpect as you do, and would not refuſe her the titles of miſs and lady, which to all appearance are her due; titles which her ſad misfortunes give her an additional claim to. But this thought proceeds from a ſentiment of generoſity of which we ſhall find very few capable. It is like a preſent we would make, which every body elſe will think themſelves at liberty to refuſe. Tho' they would be to blame, they would ſtill think ſo. They would tell you that you have nothing certain to build your conjectures upon, to which you will have nothing to reply; nothing to juſtify you in their opinion. I don't queſtion but you will freely conſent to remove all their ſuſpicions, and I have found a very eaſy way for you to do it. I have thought of providing for this young lady in an advantagious, and agreeable manner, by marrying her to a young man of honeſt parents, whoſe fortune I will augment, and with whom ſhe may live in a very honourable ſituation. I ſent for the lady to propoſe this marriage to her, which creditable and honourable as it is, ſhe refuſes. On this I thought proper to uſe her with a little ſeverity: I have even threatned to remove her from Paris. Nevertheleſs ſhe inflexibly keeps her reſolution. Join with me, Madam;

Madam; your ſervices have given you an authority over her. Pray endeavour to bring her to hear reaſon. There is the young man we are talking of, added he, ſhewing her Mr. Villot, who tho' pretty genteel, had then the air of an inſignificant fellow of no conſequence, whoſe only buſineſs was to cringe and obey, to whom it did not belong to have any ſpirit, and whom one might order to retire without doing him an injury. Juſt ſuch a perſon was then this pretended lover: I did not ſee any thing like a modeſt baſhfulneſs in his looks; for they only diſcovered the moſt ſervile and abject ſubmiſſion. The miniſter reſumed,

He is an agreeable good tempered young man, and will live with this lady, as with a perſon to whom he will owe the fortune, I ſhall on her account beſtow up on him; and this I have recommended him never to forget. To this, Mr. de Villot made no other anſwer, but by bowing almoſt to the ground. Don't you approve, Madam, of this proceeding? continued Mr. de ****, ſhe ſhall ſtay at Paris, and as you love her, ſhe ſhall never be out of your ſight. At this my benefactreſs caſt her eyes upon Mr. de Villot, who thanked her for it, with another bow; tho' the manner in which ſhe viewed him required no acknowledgement.

Alas! returned ſhe, ſhaking her head; this union I am perſuaded would not be very agreeable; and I can hardly think that Marianne will ever approve of it. Sir, I flatter myſelf, that I have, as you ſay, an aſcendant over her; but I muſt confeſs, that I can never make uſe of it on this occaſion. It would be making her pay too dear for the ſervices I have rendered her. Let her decide the queſtion; ſhe is her own miſtreſs. Come, Miſs, do you conſent to this propoſal?

I HAVE already expreſſed myſelf on this ſubject, Madam, returned I, with a melancholy, reſpectful and reſolute tone; I have ſaid I had rather remain as I am; and have not yet changed my mind. My misfortunes are very great; but what adds to them extremely, is my being born with a heart very unſuitable to my circumſtances, and which it is impoſſible for me to overcome. With this heart I could never bring myſelf to love that young man: I ſhould never accuſtom myſelf to him; but look upon him as one that nature never deſigned for me. This thought would ever dwell upon my mind: I ſhould reproach myſelf with it; but ſhould not be able to remove it from thence; by this means I ſhould render him unhappy, and baniſh all repoſe from my own breaſt. Beſides, I ſhould never forgive the diſagreeble life a huſband would be conſtrained to lead with me, who would love me perhaps, whilſt he would be the object of my utmoſt reluctance, and who might have been happy in enjoying the tenderneſs of another woman, had he not been burthened with me. Pray then let this marriage be mentioned no more. However, I thank you, Sir, for thinking of it for me; but indeed I ſhall never be able to prevail upon my ſelf to conſent to it.

TELL us then, what is your reſolution? returned Mr. de ****; had you rather be a nun? chuſe what convent you pleaſe. Come, think what condition will make you eaſy. You would not I dare ſay, ſuffer Mrs. de Valville to be teized any longer upon your account: Take your choice.——

No, no, ſaid my enemy, nothing will pleaſe her; ſhe is beloved; and ſhe will be married too; every thing is agreed upon, the little creature will not bate an inch on't; ſhe knows what ſhe is

doing. This lady, they ſay, calls her already her daughter. Mr. de **** at this diſcourſe, immediately ſilenced her by a geſture of diſpleaſure and impatience.

I AM forced, Madam, to break off, and muſt make you wait for the reſt till you receive the ſeventh part.

The End of the SIXTH PART, *and* FIRST VOLUME.